World Stakes at Stalingrad

by Colonel T.

NEW MASSES

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"Together we fight for their right to live." A painting by Joseph Hirsch

Courtesy Abbott Laboratories

TOO QUIET ON THE CULTURAL FRONT

by Samuel Sillen

Also in this Issue: White Collars Don't Wilt, by Alvah Bessie; Brazil in Hemisphere Strategy, by Samuel Putnam; It's Zero Hour, Hollywood, by John Fischer; Robeson's Magnificent Othello.

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THEY'RE NOT WAITING

The Soviets and the Chinese can still attack. While we . . .? An editorial.

THERE was something about the Soviet offensive at Rzhev, west of Moscow, and the Chinese offensive in the province of Chekiang which is at one and the same time a great encouragement—and a sharp indictment.

The chances are that neither of these developments have more than a limited meaning. The Soviet drive may be intended to offset an impending German push around Leningrad, and as such, it would jibe with the bombardments of east Prussia and Helsinki. Or else it may be of a preventive and diversionary character, such as was Timoshenko's drive at the outskirts of Kharkov last May. Likewise, the Chinese recapture of the Nanchang-Hangchow railway, and the towns that offer excellent airports for bombing Japan only 800 miles away, may also be of a limited character, due almost as much to Japanese withdrawals as it was to the pressure of China's armies.

But all that is beside the point. Not the military, but the moral and psychological implications of these events are the more significant. Here are China and Russia, two of our allies who have taken such terrific punishment, fought harder and longer than anyone else—yes, taken a more fearful punishment than any of us can possibly imagine. And yet, in their darkest hour, they have mustered the strength and will to undertake the offensive. Despite the grim picture in India, despite the terrible implications of the Nazi advance to the Grozny oil fields, the bitter battle before the cliffs of Stalingrad, these two allies have hit back. They aren't taking no for an answer.

Encouraging? Yes, but also a damning indictment. For we, of the great powers in the west, are still sitting pat three weeks after Dieppe proved what was possible. In August Gen. Wayne Clark declared that American troops do not intend to be sitting in England on their backsides; and Gen. Andrew McNaughton, who is Canada's Eisenhower, declared last week that in order to win the war, the Channel will have to be crossed.

But despite all that, the Channel has not been crossed. We are still sitting on our backsides—and this, at the end of a heartbreaking summer, in the face of a terrible autumn, two and a half months after June 11, three weeks after Churchill's return from Moscow.

LAST winter the Russians were on the offensive. We failed to coordinate our forces with theirs. The initiative passed to the enemy. Last May Timoshenko was on the offensive at Kharkov. We did not dovetail our efforts with his. The initiative passed back to the enemy. Last June the Nazis threw everything they had into the battle for the Don and the Caucasus. And despite the hopes that rose high after the Molotov visit, nothing was done during that crucial battle, and the result is that we lost it. Everybody lost it, not only the Russians.

For two weeks now the battle for the Volga has been in full swing: it is a fateful struggle and will determine whether this can be a relatively short war of coalition, or whether it is to be terribly long drawn-out and indecisive, the main brunt of it falling on us in such a way that our allies may not be able to give us effective assistance. And again, despite the high hopes that were raised by the Dieppe raid, nothing has been done. Except in secondary theaters, such as in the Solomon Islands, we are not showing the kind of timely, full scale offensive power that the war demands of us. The result is that the enemy still calls the tune, still holds the initiative.

All summer our strategy has been penny wise and pound foolish. The enemy threatens, therefore, to overrun the Nile valley and the entire Middle East. He threatens Brazil at Dakar. He threatens India from two sides. He threatens Siberia. He threatens to isolate us physically from our allies, because we have permitted ourselves a separation in strategic thinking from our key allies. The enemy prepares for us a terrible awakening.

Almost a year ago now, Stalin projected the perspective of victory in 1942—and how clear now, that no matter how limited our forces, a timely blow in the west might already have us well on the way to that victory. Last week, on the third anniversary of the war, *Pravda* expressed the hope that a fourth anniversary would be unnecessary. Shall we fail in the next few months, as we have in the last, to meet the war's crisis? That is the big question, and as *Pravda* also observed, it involves the very honor of Britain and the United States.

NOT that nothing at all is being done. Many excellent things in widely separated fields of the war effort are taking place. Donald Nelson is at last getting tough—let us hope, not too little, nor too late. The President is getting tough—he immediately improved morale by ending the confusion of contradictory statements from administration agencies—and in the next few days we hope to hear from him some forthright proposals for an over-all economic planning of the war effort. We have evidently held our ground in the Solomons; our bombers, as well as Britain's, are dealing heavy blows on Germany's Rhineland and Baltic cities; apparently this is even being coordinated with the Soviet air raid program as well. Such decisions as may have been taken at the Churchill-Stalin conference are presumably bearing fruit . . . but the big blow, the thrust of great decision, the unhesitating offensive square into the heart of France, which alone can save the Volga, the Nile, the Mississippi . . . of this there is as yet no sign.

IT WAS understandable that after Dieppe, and the Churchill trip, the demand for the second front should have somewhat abated. People felt that these encouraging things had been made possible by their own speaking up. The thousand-fold registration of public will, the popular readiness for sacrifice at no matter what cost, the instinctive understanding of the masses created the atmosphere that made Dieppe possible, that lifted the ban of the London *Daily Worker,* that began to raise hell in Washington.

Now three weeks are gone. Water under the bridge. Not time wasted, but certainly not employed as it should and might have been. It is high time for a more insistent, a more widely amplified popular demand for the second front. "Hit Hitler Now"—was Senator Claude Pepper's slogan at a union rally in Pittsburgh last week. It is a good slogan and must be heeded. To Hit Hitler Now is the supreme need of the hour.

If the decision for a second front has already been made, such a public groundswell will hardly interfere with our military leadership; it can only have the effect of bolstering the people's readiness, heightening the atmosphere of climax. If the decision has not yet been made—at such a terribly late, critical moment—then obviously only the stubborn and insistent intervention of popular will is going to make it. Hitting Hitler Now by a full-fledged second front in France is the crux of the whole war, the crux of the coalition of United Nations.

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FRONT LINES by COLONEL T.

THE BATTLE FOR STALINGRAD

Its decisive significance to all the United Nations. How it can be won. The meaning of the Rzhev offensive. Field Marshal von Bock has trouble with logistics.

THE quip about the Red Army "opening its own second front" has become quite popular. There is, of course, more sarcasm than fact in it. The Soviet local offensive in the Rzhev-Vyazma sector is in no way a second front; neither can it have the effect of even a remote substitute for one.

The fundamental idea of a real second front is to force the enemy to face in two opposite directions. Hit him in the chin and in the small of his back at the same time so as make him spin around, figuratively speaking. It is clear that hitting him in the chin and in the solar plexus will not have the same effect, because his attention will be still engaged only in one direction.

Furthermore, the scope and location of the Red Army offensive in the Rzhev sector has certainly not forced Field Marshal von Bock to give up some of his reserves to help out the Nazi generals on the central front. Von Bock is using some eighty divisions with no less than ten panzer divisions among them, all at Stalingrad and points south. On the other hand, so far, the Red Army has routed, decimated, and shaken up no more than eleven German divisions, with two panzer divisions included among them, in the Rzhev offensive. Thus we see that for the present the central push of the Red Army is in scope and actual numbers equivalent to but one-eighth of the German push against Stalingrad and the Caucasus.

There is no evidence that the German High Command has had to shift troops from the lower reaches of the Volga to its headwaters. (Rzhev is on the Volga, some 1,250 miles up-stream from Stalingrad, but only 700 miles as the crow flies.) Even if it had to throw in reserves at Rzhev it would most certainly bring them 600 miles from Warsaw instead of borrowing them from von Bock at Stalingrad. The Red Army offensive at Rzhev is seemingly a defensive operation, aiming to forestall a possible German push from this stronghold in the direction of Kalinin and Yaroslavl. Throwing the Germans off balance in this sector is of the greatest importance as can be seen from the way the Germans have stubbornly clung to Rzhev ever since the Red Army approached it in early March but were not able to take it. But it certainly is not going to affect directly the German effort at Stalingrad.

WHILE in the wooded and marshy regions west and northwest of Moscow the German numerical superiority in tanks and planes is partly negated by great stretches of forest, while the individual Soviet fighter with his inherent initiative and stamina is assisted by those same forests, the main German military might remains concentrated in the south, at Stalingrad, where the terrain and the weather are direct "allies" of the invaders. This is where the Germans are seeking a decision within the next couple of weeks and they will not be deterred from their goal by anything less than a real Western Front on European soil. Thus the battle for Stalingrad is the most decisive issue in the struggle of the United Nations and must obscure in importance all other present actions and operations, even that of the heroic Chinese armies.

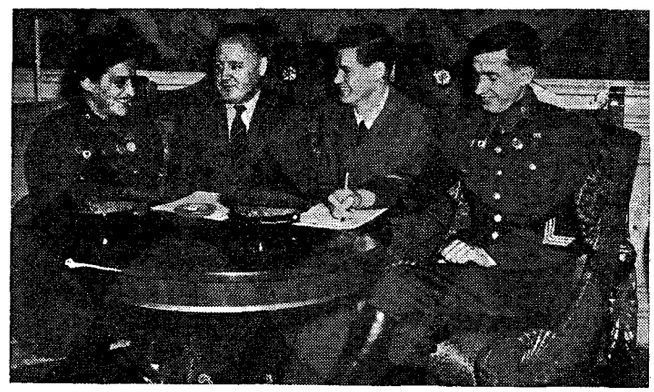
Everything—and this means nothing less than the opening of a second front in Europe—must be done to help the Red Army win this battle. Those who say that it would take "too much strength and power" on the part of the Allies to do it now are either intentionally or unintentionally misrepresenting the situation. This situation, while extremely dangerous for Stalingrad in particular and the Red Army and the USSR in general, is far from being a bowl of cherries for von Bock.

Let us examine briefly certain problems of logistics and supply from the German viewpoint. First of all, it has been established from all sources available that von Bock is using about fifty infantry divisions, twenty motorized divisions, and ten panzer divisions in the big southern push. Assuming that the only "solid" and "reliable" supply bases the Germans have must be located outside the area of Soviet guerrilla activity and that "field bases" only can be located within the confines of the USSR, we find that von Bock's line of communications stretches to a length of about 900 miles from the rockade line (a line parallel to the front) Voronezh-Rostov to Warsaw by rail with another 150 miles or more by road (from that same line to the approaches to Stalingrad). In the case of the German spearhead in the North Caucasus the line is by 200 miles longer. From Warsaw to Mozdok the distance is about 1,300 miles.

Von Bock has four railroad lines leading to the main transversal line Voronezh-Rostov. These lines join the rockade line at Millerovo, Kamensk, Sulin, and Rostov. East of that line, the only railroad available is the one running from Kamensk to Stalingrad. It is about 200 miles long. Let us note in this conjunction that the other railroad leading to Stalingrad from the northwest cannot be used by the Germans because of the Soviet stonewall stand at Voronezh. The railroad leading to Stalingrad from the southwest can be used (intermittently), but it is a long haul by way of Rostov and Tikhoretsk (350 miles). So we see that von Bock has four railroads, a total of no more than six tracks, leading to his advance bases and one single track line from the army bases to the front's railheads.

Let us now see how much stuff von Bock has to transport over these railroads. We will assume, for the sake of simplicity —such calculations cannot be exact unless we have at our disposal the complete logistical graphs of the German General Staff—that von Bock is using seventy-five divisions.

A very conservative American army estimate, based certainly on battles of less intensity than the one developing



Delegates from the Soviet Union to the International Student Assembly. From left to right: Senior Lt. Lyuimilla Pavlichenko, 26-year-old girl guerrilla who has killed 309 Germans; Vladimir Bazykin, First Secretary of the Soviet embassy; Nikolai Krasavchenko, Moscow youth leader who directed the building of Moscow's outer fortifications; and 23-year-old Senior Lt. Vladimir Pchelintsev, who killed 152 Germans with 154 bullets.

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before Stalingrad, fixes the figure of slightly in excess of 4,000 tons of supplies and ammunition as necessary for one day of combat by an army corps. This does not include gasoline and oil for transport, tanks, armored cars, and planes. The daily supplies needed by von Bock amount to at least 100,000 tons *plus* gasoline and oil.

It is estimated that on the average a combat vehicle forming part of an armored division travels one mile per gallon. Ten panzer divisions have about 5,000 such vehicles. A total of twenty tons of fuel per mile. Here it must be remembered that the number of *tactical* miles which a combat vehicle travels is many times more than the *strategic* mileage traveled by the unit. Just as a game-dog travels a distance ten and more times that covered by his master, so tanks and armored vehicles in combat cover many times more ground than their division or corps covers on the map in terms of operational advance or retreat. No exact calculations are possible because much depends on the terrain and on the resistance of the enemy, but it is fair to say that 200 tons of fuel are necessary for ten panzer divisions to cover one (strategic) mile. This, in turn, means an average of 1,000 tons of fuel per day. The German advance in the last sixty days was about five miles along the operational direction Kharkov-Stalingrad.

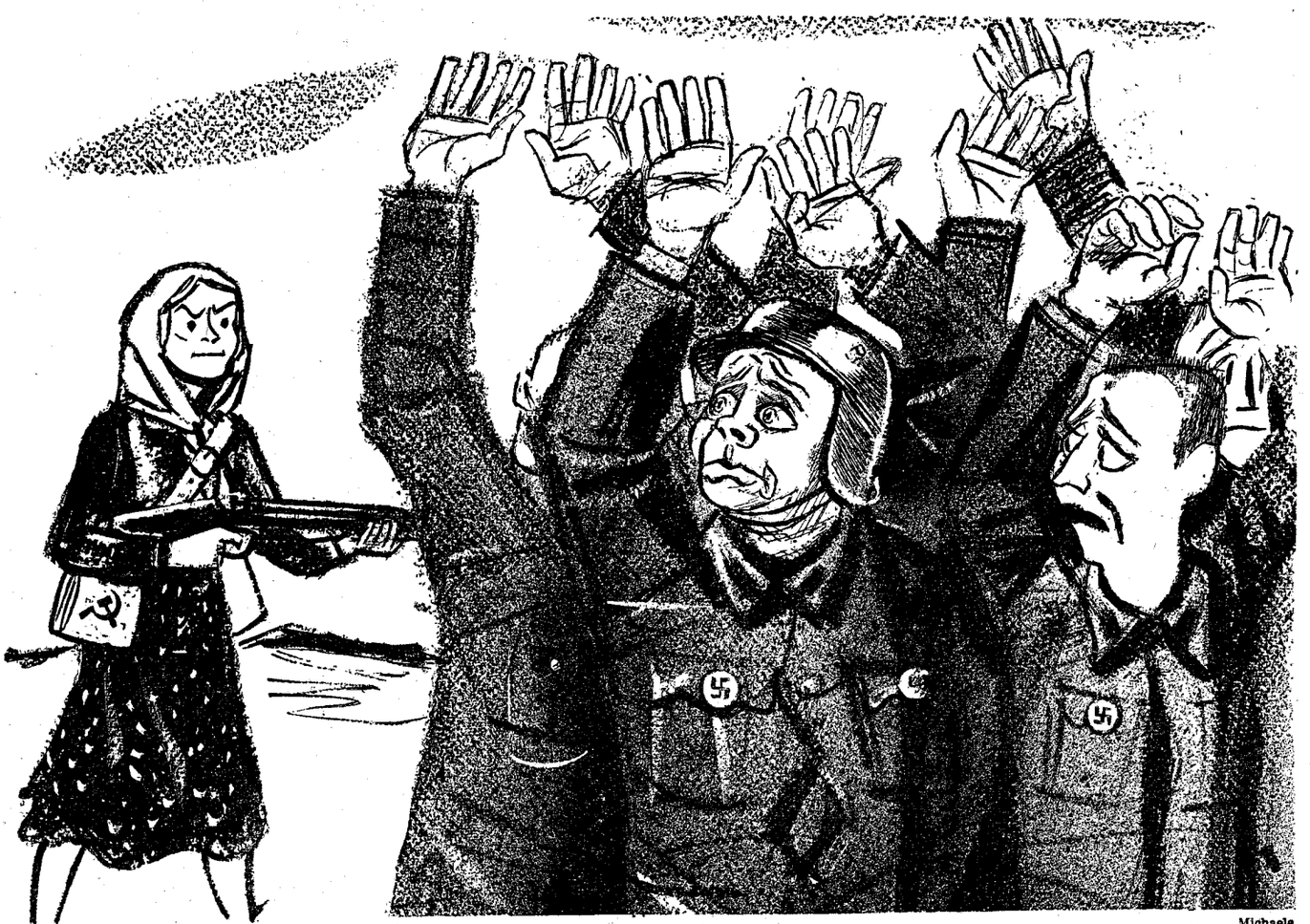
Maj. George Fielding Eliot estimates that von Bock's twenty-five army corps need another 3,000 tons of fuel per day for their other vehicles—not counting the armored forces. Total—4,000 tons of fuel per day, not counting the air force.

ALL in all, counting in the air force, the needs of the countless staffs and headquarters organizations, plus the needs of the supply system itself, it can be estimated that von Bock needs about 150,000 tons per day, of which 100,000 are needed in the Stalingrad sector and 50,000 in the other sectors in the Caucasus.

The six tracks leading from the deep German rear to the line Voronezh-Millerovo-Rostov can carry no more than 65,000 tons per day. (A single track line can carry 7,500 tons and a double track line can carry 25,000 tons.) This means that von Bock's main feed lines can carry only forty percent of what he needs, the rest having to be moved by road which greatly complicates the problem by the need of "supplying the supply system." But when the stuff reaches the railheads on the line Voronezh-Rostov, it is faced with a single track which can carry only 7,500 tons per day. Let us assume that the railroad Rostov-Tikhoretskaya-Kotelnikov carries another 7,500 tons. This leaves 100,000 tons less 15,000 tons, or 85,000 tons to be carried daily by truck and cart a distance of some 200 miles. This requires certainly no less than 50,000 trucks and countless horse carts because a truck cannot cover a total of 400 miles in twenty-four hours.

It thus becomes clear that von Bock's problem in fighting a mammoth battle at the end of the long trail to the Volga is not easy and that the strain is bound to tell. It is also clear that Marshal Timoshenko intentionally forced von Bock to fight the general battle under such adverse conditions. *This, however, does not mean that the danger to Stalingrad does not remain extremely grave.*

The Red Army must preserve its offensive power for this fall and winter. It still has it, as the battles around Rzhev show. It may lose it with the loss of the Volga. That "second front" the Red Army opened west of Moscow is a great tribute to its resiliency, stamina, and leadership, but it cannot take the place of a real second front, the necessity and the feasibility of which is greatly enhanced by von Bock's precarious, albeit victorious, so far, position on the Don. Neither El Alamein, nor Tulagi nor Nanchang, neither bombs on Kassel, nor Berlin nor Crete will pull the strings that can yank von Bock back from Stalingrad and the oil of Grozny and Baku.



Michaels

". . . Personally, Schultz, I still think woman's place is in the kitchen."

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THE WEEK in LONDON by CLAUDE COCKBURN

LESSON NUMBER ONE

They're still drawing conclusions from the Dieppe raid. What one well informed military observer thinks. . . . The effects of the lifting of the ban on the "Daily Worker" and "The Week."

London (by cable).

NINE-TENTHS of the discussions here in the last few days have been devoted to analyzing the lessons of Dieppe and likewise to the continuously increasing gravity of the urgent situation on the Eastern Front. One of the ablest military observers now in Britain is a man who held a leading position in the Spanish republican forces. He has written for private circulation a brief memorandum which I have seen and which excellently sums up the lessons and conclusions that can be drawn from Dieppe as they strike a brilliant and well informed military mind. He begins by pointing out that Dieppe "proved above all that landing in strength on the fortified enemy Channel coast is possible." After referring to the activities of the successful combined Russian forces on the Kerch Peninsula last winter as an indication of the possibilities of establishing bridgeheads, he says, "The various landings in the Dieppe raid were carried out on one of the most strongly fortified sectors of the Channel coast on both sides of Dieppe Harbor along a twelve-mile front which must have been regarded by the German commander in France as a potential invasion point. Nevertheless, the landing party reached its objective, overcame the beach fortifications, and achieved its aims further inland. . . .

"Another outstanding feature of the Dieppe raid is that a force of tanks, probably light tanks, was landed from barges after the enemy was cleared from the shore and some of his batteries were silenced. Thus certain professional military correspondents who are obsessed by Maginot-minded thinking and still stick to theories learned at Sandhurst or Camberley after the Boer War have proved to be wrong again. A landing force does not need, during the initial stage of an invasion, a port in order to disembark tanks, guns, and other heavy equipment. A port is undoubtedly needed for the second phase of any invasion in order to land the heavy material and to supply the columns which are penetrating into the rear of the coastal defenses, but Dieppe has proved that tanks could go into action with the first land parties.

"British and American equipment, which was so heavily criticized by the appeasers during the debate on the Libyan defeat, has stood the test of a most difficult operation. This equipment was used by spirited and well trained soldiers during an offensive action which was carefully prepared, well coordinated, and directed with vigor and determination.

"The Dieppe raid was a success in spite of the heavy casualties. The heavy loss of planes appears to have occurred because of the unexpectedly quick arrival of the German air reserves. This created for a short period a situation where air domination over the battle zone could only be maintained by ruthless attacks against the enemy machines without regard to our own losses. With the arrival of fresh British fighter reserves . . . complete air mastery was reestablished."

Continuing this criticism of the weaknesses which disclosed themselves, the writer goes on to point out that "A considerable number of planes seem to have been lost during the low level attacks against the enemy strong points. If dive bombers had been available, these losses would have been much smaller, and the accuracy of the bombing would have been certainly greater. Although the daylight reembarkation was carried through with success, a number of prisoners fell into enemy hands because some of the men were cut off from the beaches. So far, no official account has been given of why this happened. It might be possible that the German panzer division stationed at Amiens succeeded in getting to Dieppe before or during reembarkation. . . . If they [the panzers] had been held up by heavy bomber attacks and by obstacles created by a few determined parachute troops, or if they had been diverted by a simultaneous raid elsewhere, their intervention would have been too late."

THIS represents a view pretty generally accepted by progressive military opinion. Last week another event occurred which must be appreciated in its full significance as an indication that views of this kind, backed by the instinctive, enthusiastic demand of the mass of the people, can and do emerge victorious over all the opposition of appeasers and reactionaries. I am referring, of course, to the lifting of the ban on the *Daily Worker* and *The Week*. You are familiar with the extent and vigor of the public campaign demanding the lifting of that ban. It becomes, as I have said, before, both a symbol and a touchstone. The campaign was a symbol of the vigorous determination of the mass of the people, and above all, of the great trade unions, the Labor Party and cooperative organizations to ensure the freedom of expression of a newspaper which, whether they agree with its basic opinion or not, nevertheless was recognized as the greatest potential force in British journalism for the mobilization of the national war effort. It was a touchstone at the same time of the sincerity of the government, or perhaps it would be better to say a touchstone of the ability of the sincere forces in the government to defeat those who were opposing them.

The campaign had reached proportions very rarely seen in Britain before. The question of the ban had become one full of meaning for hundreds of thousands of people who actually had never seen a copy of the *Daily Worker*.

TO THEM, in consequence, the ban on the *Daily Worker* was a constant ground for suspicion and for the fostering of doubt and frustration. It was a situation which, of course, lent itself to the propaganda of the Trotskyists, whose slogans so faithfully week by week reflect the directive given to them by the particular Nazi radio station which specializes in this activity concerning Britain.

The lifting of the ban has for all those reasons resulted in a new feeling of confidence, a new sense of national unity, and a new realization on the part of the people, and the people's organizations, of the power which they possess in Britain at this moment, in the life and death struggle against fascism. Over and over again voices have been raised at meetings, at discussions, and in the press by those who despaired of progress or of achieving the fulfillment of popular demands and who, as a justification for cynicism, pointed to the fact that the ban on the *Daily Worker* and *The Week* had not been removed.

That the *Daily Worker* will now play a role of unparalleled and unprecedented importance in the practical mobilization of this country's war effort nobody doubts. This is not a view held only by Communists; it is accepted as a fact by members of all parties, including many of the highest officials who are in a position regionally or otherwise to know the real facts.

This is the guarantee that the British people, despite all hindrances and sabotage, will nevertheless be able to impose their antifascist will. Last week there was throughout the country, sharp intensification of the demand for the opening of the second front. In London on August 30 meetings in every borough parallel and redouble the central meeting in Trafalgar Square a few weeks ago. The people are moved to a degree not seen in our lifetime. The people are calling for action. The people believe that Mr. Churchill is prepared, if he is sufficiently supported, to carry out the people's demands.

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THE COMMUNISTS NOMINATE . . .

Program and candidates of the New York convention. "Open a Second Front Now." Proposals to organize the nation's war economy under a national plan. The stand on the other parties.

Labor veteran Israel Amter—the Communist Party's candidate for the New York governorship.

I AM no more impartial than the next fellow in this election campaign. In fact, I am decidedly partial to win-the-war candidates. Yet as I sat at the press table at the New York state convention of the Communist party I kept thinking: is it possible for any honest, objective person of whatever political faith to have attended, as I did, the conventions of the Democratic, American Labor, and Communist Parties, and not come to the conclusion that the Communist gathering was by all odds the most businesslike, the most democratic, the most completely devoted to the main job of winning the war?

At the Democratic convention I spent most of my time in that part of the hall where the most raucous Bennett delegates were gathered. It was an enlightening experience. Was that booing of President Roosevelt's name that I heard, or did my ears deceive me? But others heard it too. The best speech at the convention was made by Senator Wagner when he nominated Senator Mead for governor. He was the only speaker who made winning the war the chief issue in the campaign and the chief criterion for selecting the candidate for governor. But Wagner was the most heckled speaker at the convention. There was something disturbing about the hard, cocky, bellicose faces around me. I had seen faces like that before at another convention—back in 1936 when Charles E. Coughlin's National Union for Social Justice endorsed an earlier Bennett named Lemke for President.

The American Labor Party convention was very different in spirit. It was pro-Roosevelt and anti-appeasement. What struck me most forcibly when I entered the hall was the character of the ALP delegates. They were predominantly of the working class, men and women from the shops and factories, with a sprinkling of office workers and professionals. But a second striking feature at the ALP convention was the passivity of the delegates. That passivity came not from within but from without, imposed by the whole conduct of the convention. Between sessions there was no lack of animated discussion as little eddies of delegates collected outside the Capitol Hotel. But inside the hall all the action was on the stage and behind the scenes, with the delegates reduced to the role of mere spectators. The convention, of course, did well when it refused to go along with Jim Farley's and the Christian Front's John J. Bennett, or with the doubletalking Thomas E. Dewey, favorite of Pegler and Hoover, and instead nominated its own candidate for governor, Dean Alfange. But this, as Earl Browder pointed out at the Communist convention, was only "a minimum to which the Labor Party was in honor bound." The bureaucratic and undemocratic manner in which the convention was conducted and the shortcomings in its platform were, it seems to me, closely related to the fact that the most constructive elements in the ALP were excluded from the leadership of the convention and from all its committees.

THE Communist convention was something else again. Big banners around the hall summed up its meaning: Not an Idle Man, Not an Idle Machine, Not an Idle Acre—Everything for Victory in the War—Open the Second Front Now! And on the platform, flanked by the flags of the United Nations, a large service flag with the figure 2,800, the number of members of the N. Y. Communist Party and Young Communist League now in the armed forces.

At this convention too the delegates were predominantly working class, but they were active factors in the proceedings, not simply hand-raisers. And they represented a membership that likewise participated actively in the preparations for the convention. Every branch of the Communist Party and Young Communist League not only elected delegates, but discussed the issues, made up its collective mind about them and embodied its opinions in resolutions submitted to the convention. That's why from start to finish this was a convention that knew where it was going. And the treatment it received in the press (the New York *Times* reports were especially comprehensive) and the presence of official speakers from the Red Cross, the USO, and the OCD showed that in other quarters too the Communists were beginning to be recognized as an important positive force in our nation's fight for life.

Another significant fact: this was the only convention at which Negro men and women were full citizens, in posts of leadership together with whites—James W. Ford chosen permanent chairman of the convention and later vice-chairman of the new Communist state committee, Ben Davis, Jr., nominated as candidate for attorney general, Joseph Green, Buffalo steel worker, named convention secretary, and others on major committees.

And this is a party that is constantly bringing forward new young leaders—though lots of them, of course, are now in the armed forces. The keynote speaker was no stuffed shirt, but a man in his thirties, Gil Green, who after years of service in the YCL has become one of the national leaders of the Communist Party. And his speech was no series of elastic generalizations.

TWO issues stood out in the deliberations: the immediate opening of a second front and the organization of our country's war economy under a national plan. On the latter point, which marks a further development of the Communist program for winning the war, let me quote Earl Browder, whose speech that concluded the convention was remarkable:

"Nothing would arouse such unanimous enthusiasm among the people as an authoritative plan for the complete harnessing of our nation's economy to the war effort, for a centralized national administration of economy, for a complete subordination of private gain and privilege to the collective task for the duration of the war . . . the necessary forms of war economy are not socialism at all, and only fools can propose a socialist transition in the United States at this moment of crisis as a means of winning the war. A war economy, fully centralized, would be the highest form of capitalism, not socialism. It is the essential form of war economy, and every delay in reaching this form is only postponing victory, increasing its costs."

It was in line with the whole win-the-war emphasis of the Communist convention that it determined its attitude toward the three other tickets in the field. The Farley-Bennett cabal in control of the state Democratic Party were branded "the most dangerous obstacle to the win-the-war policies of President Roosevelt," while Dewey was likewise rejected as the candidate of defeatists and obstructionists. As for the American Labor Party, while commending its decision to nominate an independent slate, the convention felt that the divisive policies of its leaders and the weaknesses of its platform create doubts as to the character of the campaign it will conduct. For this reason the Communist convention decided to nominate its own full slate for state and Congressional office, while setting up a committee "which even at this eleventh hour shall explore the possibilities of achieving the maximum possible degree of political unity with other patriotic groups around the crucial issues of the campaign." Heading the ticket as nominee for governor is Israel Amter, now and for many years past one of the most popular Communist leaders, a man of rich and selfless patriotism. And perhaps one can pay no finer tribute to the Communist convention than to say it was a convention of patriots—not the professional variety, but the kind that are of the people, deep down, as they were in 1776 and 1861.

A. B. MAGIL.

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BRAZIL IN HEMISPHERE STRATEGY

Rich in manpower and materials, the country's war declaration will have immediate effects on all South American nations. Samuel Putnam tells what Berlin miscalculated.

FUTURE analysts will look upon Brazil's recent declaration of war on Hitler Germany and fascist Italy as one of the major turning points in this great war. Indeed, it would almost seem to any person with an adequate knowledge of the forces involved that the Wilhelmstrasse must already be conscious of, and be repenting, its mistake; for as President Roosevelt phrased it in his cablegram to President Vargas, this action on Brazil's part "has hastened the coming of the inevitable victory of freedom over oppression. . . ."

Rarely was there a nation more wantonly attacked and provoked into war than was Brazil. A state of war between Brazil and Germany and between Brazil and Italy had in actuality existed since the beginning of the year, and especially since, acting upon the recommendation of the Rio de Janeiro conference in January, Brazil took the lead (or was one of the first South American countries to do so) in breaking off diplomatic relations with the Axis. In that seven-and-a-half-months' period nineteen Brazilian ships had been sent to the bottom by Nazi and Italian submarines. The actual declaration followed the sinking in the course of two days (August 16 and 17), of six Brazilian vessels *plying the coastwise trade,* with a heavy loss of life—at least 600—on the part of the crews. This led to a week of intense anti-Nazi demonstrations in the capital, climaxing months of similar protests by the proud and democratic-minded people of the country. What was there to do but formally recognize the state of war which had long existed, a war which, with the aid of British and American bombing planes, Brazil itself had for some time been waging, being able to point to the reprisal sinkings of not less than three Axis submarines?

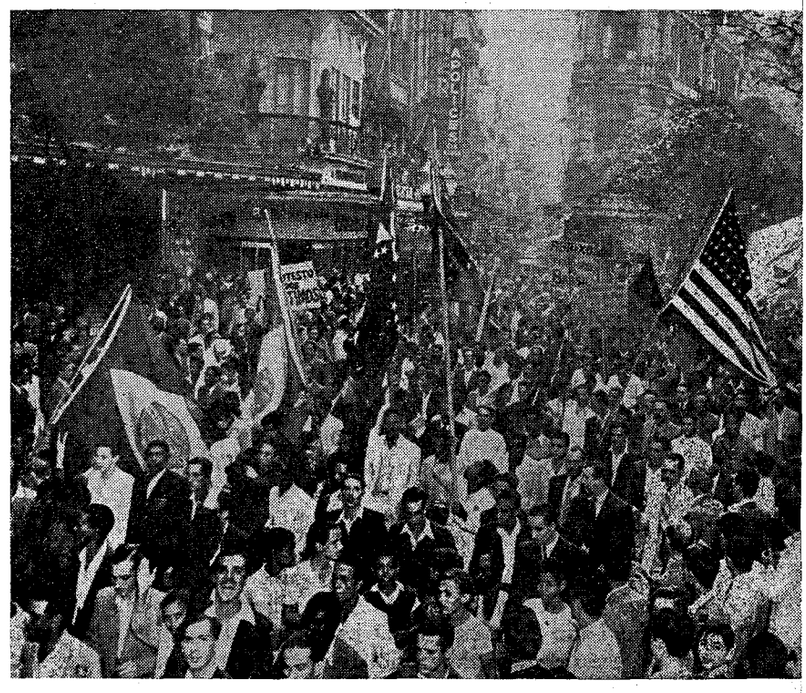
Here was not only the eleventh nation of the Western Hemisphere to take such action, but the first of the ten South American republics, the first south of the Panama Canal zone, to do so. Not only that; Brazil is the largest nation of the hemisphere in point of size, with an area of more than 3,250,000 square miles, as compared with our own 3,000,000. Its population, it is true, is only from 40,000,000 to 43,000,000; but in potential reserves of fighting manpower it is one of the strongest nations in the world. This manpower—no figures are available, nor could they be published if they were—has to be equipped and trained, but it is none the less there. And finally, by reason of its geographical situation, the famous continental "bulge" which brings it—and the hemisphere—within some 1,700 miles of Dakar, Brazil has been the outstanding strategic point of defense for the Western Hemisphere against Hitler aggression.

IN THE past the presence in Brazil of a strong pro-Axis fifth column movement, which reached a high point with the unsuccessful *Putsch* of Plinio Salgado and his *Integralistas,* in 1938, has given grave cause for doubt as to the safety of "the bulge." Now, however, we know that "the bulge" will be defended. The enraged and embattled Brazilian people will see to that, whatever the anti-democratic forces in high places may be, and there are still many to be rooted out. One of the first, almost instantaneous effects of the declaration of war was a cracking down on the fifth column, with a wholesale and speedy round-up of saboteurs and Axis sympathizers, as crowds surged through the streets of Sao Paulo, the "Brazilian Chicago," with the cry: "Give us guns! Give us guns!"

That, quite possibly, was something not to be found in the Wilhelmstrasse's carefully plotted charts. For there can be no doubt that Hitler had counted, and counted heavily, on the strength of his fifth column forces in Brazil—not alone on the overt Nazi movement that is rooted among the 800,000 and more Germans living in the country, but even more on the native fascists, the *Integralistas,* suppressed but still existing, the Franco-sympathizing clerical fascists, the Italian, Japanese, and Falangist agents. Hitler depended upon these elements not only for support, but for reports. And it is safe to assume that their reports, along with those he received from Argentina and other Latin American countries, led him to overplay his hand a trifle.

The one thing that a Hitler or any fascist is incapable of really calculating is the power of resistance of a democratic people. This has been shown time and again, on the Russian front, in the conquered countries, in China. And the Brazilians *are* a democratic people. Do not let anybody tell you they are not. In spite of all the vicissitudes they have endured for the past twelve years, the past seven years in particular, they have never once lost their love of democracy, their determination to achieve a democratic way of life. That spirit which flamed in the National Liberation Alliance of the early thirties is still alive today and is once more bursting into flame. Its great torch-bearer, Luiz Carlos Prestes, still lies in jail, but the cry of the people has reached him there, has penetrated to his cell, and the Vargas government has heard this cry and has been compelled to lift some of the rigors of Prestes' confinement, as it did recently when it permitted him to be interviewed by the Cuban Communist leader Blas Roca. What was this but a recognition of the growing will and power of the democratic peoples everywhere?

As for Prestes himself, he is not interested in "overthrowing the government" of anyone but Hitler and his satellites. The one thing that concerns him is the unity of his people and of all peoples fighting the Axis. Through Blas Roca he issued a clarion call for such unity, and to that call his freedom-loving, tyranny-hating fellow countrymen are now responding. The



Our Brazilian allies flocked into the streets the day their country declared war. Here they are standing before the American Embassy pledging all-out vengeance against the common enemy.

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one thing that remains is to give Prestes his own freedom, that he may contribute his great abilities and prestige to the winning of the war for Brazil and for the United Nations. To this end the labor movement of the hemisphere must raise its voice, along with that of all good democrats, in demanding Prestes' liberation.

YES, all this was undoubtedly something beyond the calculations of Hitler's "geopoliticians." Freedom is won by fighting for it; there can be no freedom in a Hitler-dominated world; but out of this war against the major tyranny, this war for the survival of nations, the domestic freedom of the fighting peoples shall also be won. Brazil's action is but another evidence that this *is* a people's war. It was this recognition that President Roosevelt clearly voiced in his cable to Vargas. This is the United Nations' real "secret weapon," for the reason that it will forever remain a secret to the Hitlers of the world.

These are the more immediate and obvious aspects of the distinctly new situation. There are other factors of very great importance which become evident upon closer study, the effect of Brazil's example upon the other South American nations. That was quickly visible, when, the moment the declaration of war was announced, Uruguay's Foreign Minister, Alberto Guani, gave out a statement indicating that his country would probably follow suit "within twenty-four hours."

If a declaration by Uruguay did not come as soon as that, this does not mean it will not come, and it may well be a reality by the time these lines appear in print. The effect on such countries as Colombia, Venezuela, and Peru was also pronounced. These nations lost no time in according Brazil non-belligerent rights. Most important of all, however, was the reaction in Chile and Argentina, those two big question marks in the South American picture.

IN THE case of Chile, with Popular Front President Juan Antonio Rios scheduled for a visit to the White House in October, the result will almost certainly be a declaration of war. Chile's obsessing fear has always been her long stretch of Pacific coastline, the longest in the hemisphere, which lies exposed to Japanese attack. But now she is in a position to realize that "neutrality" cannot save her from attack. As for Argentina, the effect should be the isolation of the pro-fascist Castillo regime and the immeasurable strengthening of the popular democratic forces, which have long wanted to break with the Axis.

Hitler, it goes without saying, could not after all have been blind to many of these potential consequences which have now become actual results of his policy of aggression against Brazil, even though he may have overestimated the strength of his fifth column while he grossly underestimated the resistance of the Brazilian people. Why then did he thus force the issue at this particular time?

The answer is to be found in a remark of der fuehrer's, quoted by Hermann Rauschning: "We shall create there [in Brazil] a new Germany. *We shall find there everything we need.*" It was in the same spirit that he said of Mexico: "With the treasures of Mexican soil, Germany would be rich and great." This was why the *Deutsche Volkszeiting* (issue of February 21, 1937) declared: *"Our cradles are on the banks of the Rhine, the Volga, the Danube, and the River Plate."*

The Volga and the River Plate—get it? In other words, as in the case of Russia, it is the tremendous, untold natural wealth of the region that lures the Nazi bandits on. Brazil, we must remember, is not only in all probability the richest of the Latin American countries in natural resources, but one of the richest in the world. It is, as a matter of fact, literally impossible to estimate its untapped wealth in minerals (including gold and diamonds), oil, rubber, cotton, sugar, coffee, and other raw materials and food supplies.

This it was which led the early century Richard Tannenberg, exponent of "Prussian Socialism" (read: German imperialism) and precursor of the Nazi "ideologists" of today, to observe (in 1911): "The German nation must also take possession of Central Africa . . . the Near East, the islands of the Malay Archipelago, *and the southern half of South America.* It would then possess a colonial empire proportionate to its power." It is this old dream of theirs that the German imperialists of the present are striving to realize with Hitler's Nazi legions.

Hitler must have the wealth that is Brazil's, just as he must have the oil of the Caucasus, if he is to carry out his dream of world conquest. If his fifth column has failed to keep Brazil out of the war, he must still attack from without, knowing as he does, that the pro-Hitler forces are still in existence in Brazil just as they are in our own country, and that, unless they are dealt with promptly and in summary fashion, they will give him all the aid they can.

WHEN Brazil took the position that she did at the Rio conference and immediately afterward, it became evident that the Nazis were going to have to fight for those coveted resources, which were now being placed at the disposal of the United States and the other United Nations. Hence the intensification of the U-boat campaign. If it did not, by strengthening the hand of the fifth column from without, lead to an enforced "neutrality" such as that of the Castillo regime in Argentina, it would at least bring matters to a head and serve as an excuse for launching the long planned attack on the "bulge" from Dakar. That this is what Hitler means to do is indicated as these words are written, by the radio allegation that the United Nations are planning an assault on the West African base. This will at once be recognized as the usual Nazi propaganda line, preliminary to an attack by themselves.

At the same time there comes news that Marshal Petain, darling of our State Department, is preparing a coup in French Guiana, which lies just north of Brazil. How does it all add up? This: that while we are inexplicably delaying the opening of a second front in western Europe, Hitler himself, drawing nearer inch by inch to the oil of the Caucasus and the wealth of the Don basin, is planning to open a second front by way of Dakar that will bring him into our own backyard. For Hitler is not like Hanson Baldwin and the other anti-second front military "experts"; he is not fighting a defensive, but a desperate all-out offensive war.

It may thus be seen that, while the full-fledged entrance of Brazil into the war is a great piece of news for the United Nations, it at the same time does not lessen the danger of the Axis invasion of our own shores—possibly, even, that two-sided Nazi-Japanese invasion of which Vice-President Wallace warned us some while ago. There are other dangers as well, of an internal nature. In the work of exterminating the fifth column inside Brazil, the surface has barely been scratched as yet. Brazil has not declared war on Japan, giving as a reason that Japan had been guilty of no act of aggression toward her. This leaves the Japanese legation and consular staffs and a considerable Japanese population (some 200,000) free to carry on espionage and sabotage, unless they are carefully watched. Equally dangerous are the representatives of Franco and Laval and the native clerical fascists. The *Integralistas,* being so well spotted and openly pro-Hitler, and the German population will likely give the least trouble of all.

The hopeful aspect of it all is that the Brazilian people are so thoroughly awake to these perils and to the tasks that confront them. And once a people are aroused as they are—the United States on the morrow of Pearl Harbor is the only comparison one can make—dangers will be met and necessary tasks will be performed, we may be sure of that. The Brazilian people are on the march to freedom. Nothing can stop them now.

SAMUEL PUTNAM.

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HEY, MARC

That's what thousands affectionately call Rep. Vito Marcantonio in his home bailiwick. Profile of a twenty-four-hour-a-day congressman renominated by three parties. A visit to his district.

IT WAS at the very beginning of the primaries campaign. Signatures had to be filed for a place on the Democratic, Labor, and Republican tickets. A tough job even for the indefatigable Twentieth Congressional District. The house-to-house canvass was just getting under way. Fingering their quotas of index cards, the district captains were reporting on the evening's progress in the "inside" office at headquarters, 1766 Lexington Avenue. Mostly it was the same story: "He said yes. She said sure. They said of course."

One of the younger captains stopped over a card and shook his head: "This guy won't sign."

"Whadya mean he won't sign?"

"Who is he?"

"Where does he get that stuff?"

The captain just stared glumly at the card and over the hub-bub repeated: "He won't sign. Not this one." It grew quiet. A tense quiet. Looking straight at Marcantonio, a warm grin melting across his face only at the last moment, he held the card out to his chief. Scrawled over its face was the word:

"Deceased."

Loud laughter filled the little office. Warm laughter. "Nobody but a dead guy would'nov signed for Marc." The kind of record these captains made in getting the number of signatures they did almost proved it. The vote rolled up on primary day practically clinched it.

How did it happen?

The metropolitan press, excluding the progressive labor press, and in language varied only by the "style" set by its publishers, opened its columns to all comers bent on driving Marcantonio out of public office. It became front page stuff every time a direct or indirect attack was leveled at the representative from the Twentieth District. Editorial comment on his victory was divided between the vicious trick of lumping him with New York's defeatist congressmen Fish and Barry, and bewilderment garnished with liberally dispensed venom—whether in the gutteral lingo of the *Mirror's* "Dirge for a Dead Duck" or the more august vitriol of the New York *Sun*.

Then how did it happen? The answer lies in the things Marcantonio stood for, the way he fought for them, the kind of man this Vito Marcantonio is.

"Hey, Marc, could I see ya a minute?"

In his law offices downtown, in his headquarters uptown, on 116th Street, at the Marcantonio Club—everybody, anybody, young, old, Negro, white, native, foreign-born—if you live in the district you know you can stop him and say, "Hey, Marc," and you know you will be heard.

VITO MARCANTONIO was born on Dec. 10, 1902, the son of a hard-working, poor Italian family, on 112th Street and First Avenue. His father, Saverio, was born and brought up in the same neighborhood. His mother, Angelina, was born in Italy. Grandfather Vito Marcantonio and Grandma Antonia had come over in the emigration of the early eighties. Grandfather Vito was a carpenter—a builder—a man of strong democratic traditions, a man who would have understood and been proud of what young Vito means to the people he grew up among today. Grandma has lived to see it. At seventy-nine her energetic little figure is a familiar sight trudging briskly about the district, especially around campaign time. She attends all the big meetings, and beams at those where her Vito speaks to the people in fluent Italian, quoting Garibaldi and the wonderful words of Garibaldi's hymn. But woe to the heckler or anyone her bright little eyes suspect of incipient heckling or inattention. "Sh-hh," she whispers loudly. "You better listen. You'll learn something."

Marcantonio of New York's Twentieth—"Nobody but a dead guy would'nov signed for him."

She probably said the same thing to him, back in the days when young Vito went to PS Eighty-Five on 117th Street and First Avenue and got into all the mischief that kids must who have no playground but dusty, tenement-lined streets; no refuge from trucks and trolley cars but narrow alleys; no quiet resting place but fire escapes. He undoubtedly got the same always-to-be-remembered scoldings for tearing his pants and ripping his shirts and scuffing his shoes. Hard-earned, often irreplacable necessities. Everything those kids had was hard-earned and won in battle against poverty. Even their fun.

At the foot of 112th Street, but with particular convenience at 116th Street, ran the East River. Their river. Cool, broad, carrying boats from far-off places—boats heavy laden with cargoes over water heavy laden with garbage. Even this, their prime source of recreation, was spoiled for them—polluted by disease-infested filth.

Marc loves that river. He always did. He helped fight to get it cleaned up, to stop its use for sewage. "Even the fish can finally live in it now," he says. It is his great pride that on the shores of his river stands one of the biggest government housing projects for his people. New, clean, free from vermin-ridden darkness, from evil-smelling age, safe from the scourge of tenement fires, surrounded by sunshine, and built with windows in every room that let it in. He fought and won that housing project. It was typical of the campaign promises he made and kept. But that's jumping far ahead.

He didn't see the housing project when he stood on a dock at the foot of 116th Street with his pals—a skinny little Italian

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boy among other skinny little Italian boys—poised for the plunge. "The water was so dirty somebody always had to jump in first," he remembers. "The guy who jumped in made a ring of clearer water for the rest. Especially for the littler kids." With his characteristic slow and slightly crooked grin, he adds: "I used to jump in first most of the time."

Next to swimming, baseball was the favorite sport. True you had to dodge trucks and share the street you played on with all the teeming, raucous sidewalk life of the narrow canyon between moldy tenements. But baseball in the great tradition it was. Marc still likes to break in on such a game with the neighborhood kids.

There was less time for such pleasures when high school days arrived. Only two of the boys who graduated from his class at PS Eighty-Five were able to go to high school. The rest went to work or in vain search of it. Marc went to De Witt Clinton. It was all the way down on Fifty-ninth Street and Tenth Avenue in those days. By working after school and what to other kids were holidays he was able to go on to college and to law school. This part of his story is the typical story of thousands of boys from working class homes who by their own sacrifices and the sacrifices of their families manage to wrest an education—against the toughest odds.

In 1924 Vito Marcantonio graduated from New York University Law School. He completed his legal training as clerk in two offices which provided the appropriate basis for his future interests and activities—in Joe Brodsky's labor law office and then in Mayor LaGuardia's.

His clients were always his people.

Nineteen thirty-four saw the beginning of his political career. Defying the obstacle of a machine-ridden Tammany district which only Mayor LaGuardia before him had cracked in a congressional race, he ran as the Republican nominee from the Twentieth Congressional District and won. His Democratic opponent was Lanzetta. In 1936 Tammany staged a comeback —using all the tricks in its arsenal from Red-baiting to tin-boxes. But in 1938, Marcantonio ran again. This time on two tickets—Republican and American Labor—and was elected on both. The 1940 campaign was a more triumphant repetition of the same. And as for 1942—

TO TELL Marcantonio's story from 1934 to the present day is to recite every issue vital to the American people in general and the people of the Twentieth Congressional District in particular. Its population is the typical New York working class neighborhood with one thing in common: poverty—a conglomeration of Italian, Puerto Rican, Irish, Negro, Jewish-Americans.

What were the issues? Their needs: jobs, relief, housing, WPA projects, hospitals, playgrounds, a local high school, naturalization aid—fight against fascism, fight against the sabotage of machine politics, fight against oppression, poverty, discrimination. Though his enemies tried to use it against him, his people understood the need for making that fight wherever it would do the most good—uptown and everywhere.

When a group of seamen boarded the Nazi liner *Bremen* in New York Harbor in an early anti-Nazi demonstration and threw its swastika into the bilge-water where it belonged, Marcantonio came into court to defend them. He called it a modern Boston Tea Party. He'd defended seamen before—and many since in court and in Congress—in their battle for organization. When American boys went to Spain to fight in the first attempt to stop the fascists, Marcantonio boldly spoke at rallies and meetings in their behalf and for support to the Spanish people. Intensely proud of his Italian heritage, he has fearlessly rallied his people against their fascist murderers. That heritage, he says, belongs to the people and comes from Garibaldi, Sacco and Vanzetti, the Italians who fought Mussolini in Spain, who are fighting Mussolini at home today.

He is proud of his immigrant background. Time and again his voice has risen in the halls of Congress and over national hook-ups in defense of the rights of the foreign-born. He has flung into the teeth of the reactionaries the magnificent role of the immigrant in the building of America, his loyalty to his new home, his courage, the beautiful faith he keeps with the dream that his children will grow up free men and in a free new land that would be their own.

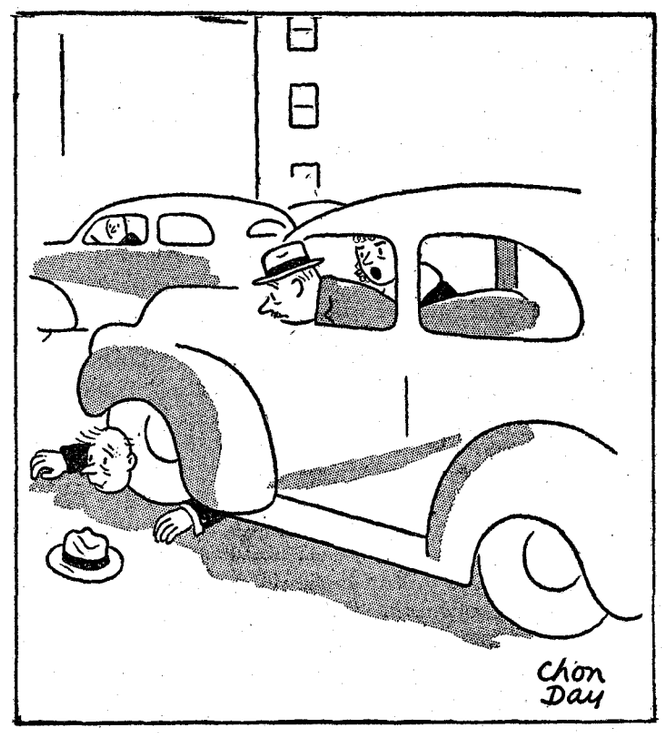
Marcantonio is also known as a champion of Negro rights. It was he who fought to win the Navy Cross for Dorie Miller. Marcantonio was the first to name him and lift him from obscure mention as the unknown young Negro messman who, breaking Jim Crow rules that forbade his doing so, seized a machine gun at Pearl Harbor and used it ably against the Japanese invaders. This is only the most recent page in a record of struggle for the freedom of the Scottsboro Boys, for Angelo Herndon, for scores of other Negro victims of discrimination.

Marcantonio's election to the presidency of the International Labor Defense several years ago was a recognition of his outstanding work in behalf of civil rights. He was among the first to oppose Martin Dies and he has continued to be one of the leaders of the fight to end the pro-fascist activities of the Dies committee.

Eight years is a long time to account for in any man's life. Particularly in the life of such a dynamic, vital figure as Marcantonio, and more particularly during eight such years as we have lived through. Today that life is chiefly divided into activities on two fronts—the second front to destroy Nazism and the home front to strengthen every aspect of the country's war effort.

HOW does a man with three official party machines working overtime against him win such a brilliant political victory as Marcantonio did on August 14? Walk into his headquarters any Sunday afternoon and you'll get the answer. You'll meet the typical captains, lieutenants, assistants, but above all, the people of the Twentieth Congressional District, the army of the constituency. The army comes to speak its mind and its heart. If you ask any of the captains what the literally thousands of people talk to Marc about in these never-postponed all-day sessions, they'll say:

"They tell him their hard luck stories. All hard luck stories



Office of War Information

"Don't just sit there! Get out and see if he's hurt the tire!"

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are the same. You can't pay the rent. Or you ain't getting enough relief. Or your kid needs to go to the hospital or he has no shoes. Or your son got in trouble. They don't just tell him. He listens. And he does something about it. And he don't stop doing it till the final ending of the case." The rest of the time he spends going to their weddings, christenings, funerals, birthday parties—not as the intruding baby-kissing politician—but as the honored invited guest of the family.

With understandable pride a representative group of captains were vying with each other in telling the stories of the present campaign in their own territories. One, a plasterer, Italian, member of the New York County Democratic Committee, digresses to talk about the six-block-long parade his group organized for a recent service flag raising at which Marc spoke. They even had two floats in addition to the six bands—Thomas Jefferson Cadets of the American Legion and Father Duffy Cadets. One float was "Remember Pearl Harbor," filled with little girls in Hawaiian costumes. Another captain, a Puerto Rican, is a shipyard worker who rushes home every day from his job in Kearny, N. J., grabs some supper and gets busy from six until all hours of the morning covering his territory. Another is a young Italian woman, twenty-eight years old, a music teacher, mother of a little girl she takes around with her canvassing her district. She recorded one of the highest Marcantonio votes. "And can she cook—even Marc said she makes the best chicken cacciatora in the district."

These are typical of the leading workers. They had some help from progressive people in other parts of the city. Michael Quill, for example, came up with a group of Transport Workers. Up and down the fifth and sixth flight tenement steps he stalked with his cane in one hand and his batch of cards in the other. The streets still ring with the repetition of the conversations he had with his countrymen—brogue and all. Ferdinand Smith led the National Maritime Union's contingent of volunteers; Lewis Merrill, the office workers. There were furriers, garment workers, lawyers from the ILD staff—everybody who was anybody.

The captains like to tell of the fifty service-flag raising ceremonies Marc never failed to attend in recent weeks. With solemn respect they tell of how he neither said nor allowed anyone else to say a word about the campaign on these occasions. He spoke only of the boys the flags represented, boys he knows by name, with whom he corresponds, to whom he sends books, and from untold numbers of whom he got happy wires of congratulations. Incidentally, he was deluged with jubilant wires from every part of the country. Many signed with names he didn't know and had never heard. Many bore names the whole country knows.

THERE is an enormous amount of clerical work in an election campaign. Who did that? Volunteers again. Girls who came in after long days of work to sit into the small hours of the morning typing, writing, filing. Girls who left war factory jobs at two PM to come home and report at headquarters by three, then stayed as long as they could keep their eyes open. One such girl was a sort of office manager. No matter what hour of the day or night you called headquarters, she seemed to be there to give the answer to any question.

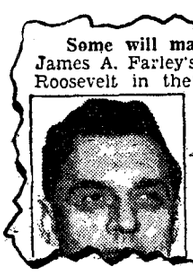
Campaign workers, worried about Marc's health, brought him things to eat from their own meager stores. Grandma hovered over the headquarters keeping a watchful eye on her sleepless, tireless, indomitable grandson. And all of them together won their triumph . . . the triumph of the people's will to fight and win the people's war in spite of appeasers and domestic Hitlerites.

What the opposition will cook up between now and election day is a matter of speculation. What the outcome will be is not. Marcantonio and his win-the-war platform will come through in November as they did in August.

SASHA SMALL.

PRESS PARADE

No Sooner Said . . .



Some will maliciously distort the meaning of James A. Farley's clear-cut victory over President Roosevelt in the showdown as to which should name the Democratic candidate for New York.

Axis propagandists undoubtedly will try to use this incident abroad to suggest that America's War President has been repudiated by his own party in his own state, the largest in the Union. They will try to show

Raymond Clapper in the Scripps-Howard Press, August 21

The nomination of Jim Farley's man, John Bennett, for Governor, means, among other things, that there will now be a reaction against New Dealism in domestic affairs in the state, for Bennett is not a New Dealer and, of course, Tom Dewey, who is almost certain to carry the banner, or target, for the Republicans, is an out-and-out anti. It is not easy to de-

Westbrook Pegler in the Scripps-Howard Press, August 21

Good Beginning

CAPTURE of Solomon Island strongholds by US Marines was a fitting occasion for the debut of official "combat correspondents" trained by the Marine Corps. Lieut. H. L. Merrilat's exciting narrative was followed by Serg. James W. Hurlbut's account, which called the Solomon battle a "kick-off" to the Pacific fight. These stories pack a terrific wallop. Appearance of the combat reporter was hailed in leading editorials. Gratifying results of this first experience may well stimulate other branches of the armed services to follow suit. The need for writer-soldiers was emphasized in an article by Samuel Sillen on "The Frontline Writer" appearing in New Masses for July 28.

Prophecy or Understatement?

"THE world's attention is today centered upon a movement originating in Italy [fascism] which has more than a merely local significance."

From an article "Fascismo," by G. Cannata, the "Liberator," (the successor of the old "Masses") January 1923.

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WHITE COLLARS DON'T WILT

The story of a union which mobilized an all-out office army. Listen in on one of the UOPWA's meetings. First of a series on white collar workers and the war.

THE posters announcing the Fourth Constitutional Convention of the United Office and Professional Workers of America (CIO) proclaim a symbolic fact. "Owing to war conditions," they say, the convention, which will be held this week, will not take place in Atlantic City, N. J., as planned, but in Albany, N. Y. It seems that the military services have taken over all the hotels in Atlantic City.

The word "war" is the symbol here. It is the keystone to the entire existence and attitude of the UOPWA, the most powerful and militant organization of white collar workers in America.

"You can't have a union-as-usual today," said Lewis Merrill, president of the organization. "You can't organize-as-usual any more than you can do business-as-usual. The war is the central issue of our lives, of our nation as well as of our union. You have to come to the workers with that central issue —victory over the Axis, and victory in 1942."

"Do you feel," I asked, "that there's a wide understanding of the issues among white collar workers?"

"It's not entirely conscious," Merrill said, "and we do our best to crystallize it. I'll give you an example. You probably read about our organizational drive among the industrial insurance agents. The government's interested in the sale of insurance these days, wants to see more of it sold; and the industrial agents are key men in the war effort—I'll tell you why: they go into the homes of the people; they know the people's problems. Well, this is the way it worked.

"We'd signed the John Hancock Co., then we went after Prudential Life. Last November 2,300 agents in the city voted for our union, three to one, but the company refused to bargain. Then came Pearl Harbor. The company still stalled. There can't be any question of a strike today, so we called in the US Conciliation Service. They couldn't get anywhere with the company, and the case was certified to the War Labor Board.

"Then we began to get results. We worked out a formula with Prudential, based on the need for unity between labor and management, whereby we agreed to accept the state as a bargaining unit, rather than the city. The company agreed to sign a contract if we won an election."

He smiled. "Well, what happened? We started organization immediately on a statewide basis. Now remember—these were all new workers upstate, middle class people who never dreamed of joining a union. We went to them purely on the issues of the war—victory; unity for victory. We started war activity committees among the agents all over the state. We didn't only talk wages, hours, or conditions—our major emphasis lay in the necessity to vote together, pull together for victory for our country—we tried to show how the solution of all other bread-and-butter problems must follow from and contribute to that end. The people realize that a victory for Hitlerism would deprive them of a country, let alone a union; deprive them of everything they've worked for all their lives.

"Four thousand agents in the state voted UOPWA, two to one. We have our contract and we're opening regional offices in Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, and Schenectady."

THIS was only one example Mr. Merrill gave me of the way a correct union policy can pull results in terms of wide organization. The UOPWA has grown faster since Pearl Harbor than during any comparable period since it was chartered by the CIO back in 1937. There are over 40,000 members now.

Relatively speaking this is only a drop in the bucket, for it is estimated that there are 12,000,000 white collar workers in this country. They have always been among the most poorly paid people of America. According to US Department of Labor figures for 1935-36, 47.8 percent of all American white collar workers earned less than $1,000 a year. Seventy-five and six-tenths percent earned less than $1,500. Ninety and eight-tenths percent earned less than $2,000. The UOPWA has been jacking up these sub-standard wage levels ever since it began its work only five years ago. Since its last convention, for example, the union has entered into 133 new contracts that cover 21,000 workers—and it has won for those workers—in that year—financial gains in excess of $6,000,000!

But the white collar workers' low incomes have not in themselves constituted a sufficient basis for organization. Most of them stem from the various strata of the middle class—and if you stem from the middle class and can remember back to 1929, you will understand the relative difficulty of organizing these people. Endowed—usually by parents—with more education than other working people, the office worker has been shrewdly separated by that education, as well as by the character of his work, from the bulk of the working population.

In many instances he works in small offices where his united strength doesn't amount to enough to buck the boss. Thousands have the idea that they'll get to be bosses themselves, and think they're not interested in "the laboring man." There are women who still look upon their jobs as a stop-gap until they marry, and many firms hire only girls who live with their parents and don't need a full independent income.

Organized labor—in the industrial field—has tended to look on white collar workers as unlikely union material, and unscrupulous bosses have used this fact to foster antagonism between "brain" and "hand" workers. White collar people have been consciously taught to think themselves superior to manual workers, in spite of the spectacular differential between the "salary" of an office worker and the "wages" of a skilled worker in an organized industry.

Well, the depression shattered many such ideas. These people soon discovered that they had as little security as the manual worker, and frequently poorer wages. When they began to understand that people who worked in offices had common bonds and interests with people who worked in shops and mills, the white collar workers found strength in union—the UOPWA—and today, as Mr. Merrill puts it, "We have our working nucleus; we've just begun to work."

How vast a function these workers perform in the economy of business and industry few people realize. In 1940 the UOPWA appeared before the TNEC, when it was holding hearings on technology and economic recovery, and I quote from Mr. Merrill's testimony:

"The growth of the white collar group has paralleled the developing experience of business itself. Its requirements compelled into existence an army of clerks and professionals of every description. Industry was confronted with an opportunity to push back America's economic and geographical frontiers by exploiting a rich internal market, teeming with profits for the energetic and the keen-witted. But those profits could not be secured unless there were goods. To produce those goods

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Pres. Merrill of UOPWA—"You can't have a union-as-usual today."

quickly and in large volume, and to get them into the hands of consumers, became the main source of profit. Administrative cost in its broad sense became a secondary question. As America's economy took a firm hold on its internal market and reached out for foreign ones as well, it was confronted with a basic problem of administration, which it solved as well as it could with what lay to hand. The phenomenal and unplanned rise of the white collar group, and the centralized modern office, is the result."

A simple statistic will make this development graphically clear—between 1870 and 1930 the percentage ratio of clerical and sales employes to the rest of the gainfully employed population rose from 2.9 percent to 16.7 percent.

THE categories of office and professional workers are staggering—there seem to be hundreds of them. So the UOPWA has four major divisions: Graphic Arts, Social Service, Insurance, and General Clerical. In the Graphic Arts division belong such unions as the Book and Magazine Union (editors, office boys, shipping clerks, book designers, manufacturing craftsmen, stenographers). There you will also find a new local, the Screen Publicists Guild, which embraces those workers who handle promotion for moving pictures; the Screen Office and Professional Employes Guild, the American Advertising Guild, the Direct Mail Employes. The last named includes, among others, mimeograph and multigraph workers, for whom the UOPWA has recently signed contracts in the New York City shops guaranteeing a fourteen-dollar minimum wage. (If this seems like starvation, you should know what they were getting before!) To the Social Service Employes Union belong those who work for private welfare agencies. (Those in public agencies come under the jurisdiction of organizations like the State, County and Municipal Workers, the Federal Workers, etc.)

I mention the Insurance Division that embraces agents for industrial insurance companies; under General Clerical there are innumerable categories of workers, and in the Graphic Arts Division, for example, there are newsstand men as well as editors and book designers. The UOPWA recently negotiated wage raises for 600 workers employed by the Union News Co. in Greater New York. The company offered raises amounting to $12,000—the union got the ante raised to $46,000!

With contracts already signed with Prudential Life, negotiations are current with Metropolitan—the biggest of them all. Contracts have also been signed on behalf of the workers in thirty-six of Womrath's chain bookstores in New York, for employes in the home offices of Columbia Pictures, RKO, MGM, and Twentieth Century Fox. Raises have been achieved and negotiations are in process on behalf of literally thousands of stenographers and typists, office boys, receptionists, filing clerks, adding machine operators, secretaries, etc.

The bulk of these people, however, are still concentrated in New York. From all over the country in the past ten years young men and women of every stratum of the middle class have flocked to the big cities for employment. Here they rub elbows with people they have never met before; people of many national groups and disparate religions, people with different ideas and backgrounds—and it is the outstanding contribution of the UOPWA, together with other great progressive unions, to act as a vast school of democracy for its membership. Working together in groups, young people from the South begin to understand the poisonous nature of anti-Negro discrimination, and to fight it. They begin to understand anti-Semitism, and to hate it. They begin to see how their wages, hours, and working conditions are significant in terms of international politics; they become pro-labor, anti-fascist, pro-democratic and all-out for the defeat of Hitlerism. And white collar people who had understood the necessity for unity of all working people in America began to work like beavers for the victory of the United Nations.

The UOPWA's victory program is the key to its success. The prospective member sees considerable point in joining up: there is a place for him in the war effort. And he will see immediately, at his union meeting, how his organization contributes to the war. In his shop or office, routine is simplified; waste materials are saved; men and women meet with their employers and discuss ways and means of streamlining the operations of their jobs. Victory committees are being formed, under union initiative, in every office; and the new member enlisted in civilian defense, in blood donation, war stamp and bond purchases, scrap salvage, Allied War Relief, gets a healthy respect for his new organization.

AT THE union meetings—I picked one at random: the monthly meeting of the American Advertising Guild, Local 20 of the UOPWA. It was held in a hall on Broadway and it started on time in spite of the rain. The president of the Guild was a middle-aging man named Howard Willard—he has a delicious sense of humor. There was a young Chinese girl, there were Jewish members, Negro members, members of many other national groups. Most of these people were young, and all of them work in the advertising industry as copy writers, layout men and women, art workers.

What happened at the meeting? Well, the Lincoln Vet who was playing the piano stopped playing and the meeting came to order. I learned that the AAG has some 300-odd members and is rapidly expanding. Its organizer is a twenty-six-year-old girl named Sylvia Elfenbein who is as handsome as she is intelligent. Rockwell Kent, a member of the AAG, was elected as a delegate to the UOPWA convention. Then there was discussion on various resolutions the Guild wants introduced at the convention of its national body: urging Congress to extend the draft to the eighteen-and-nineteen-year age

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groups; urging the independence of India and asking that its leaders be released from prison, the British government reopen negotiations, that President Roosevelt urge the British government to reconsider its position, that the British government immediately cease all repressive measures. There was a resolution urging Congress to implement the President's seven-point anti-inflation program, and enact a democratic tax program. Each resolution was discussed with a very high degree of political consciousness, though the membership was substantially in agreement on them.

I was most impressed, however, by the war-activities record of this small union which is only one section of the UOPWA's Graphic Arts Division. Miss Elfenbein reported on this, and the implications are slightly staggering. You will recall that not so long ago Ralph Ingersoll, editor of *PM,* called upon the advertising industry to start selling the war as well as it sells toothpaste, automobiles, and Frigidaires. It seems the big shots thought it over and didn't accomplish very much outside of a few meetings at the Advertising Club. But the tiny AAG had already started mobilizing the advertising industry—from below. It started, to be exact, a new organization called the Advertising Mobilization Committee. (The Book and Magazine has a comparable setup now, the Book Mobilization Committee.) It printed cards and circulated them, urging registration of advertising people—union or non-union—who were willing to help win the war. Then it went to the Civilian Defense Volunteer Office and offered its services.

"What can you do?" said CDVO.

"We'd like to be appointed clearing-house for advertising people to help the war."

The CDVO declined, as there was no precedent for such an outfit, but the AMC made a poster for them—eighty copies; a poster on the desirability of being fingerprinted. It was so good the CDVO asked for 300 more! That was the first job the AMC did for civilian defense in New York. At the moment it is mapping a citywide campaign, with official sanction, for the OCD; it has met with the city and borough heads of the CDVO and has been asked to man the borough and local councils of OCD with people trained in advertising and promotional techniques, to make posters, write leaflets and design them, help to get civilian defense across to the citizens of New York City.

You have seen the fine little pamphlet containing Charles Chaplin's speech which is being circulated. That's the work of the AMC. The magnificent second front poster reproduced on these pages is their work—designed by Rudy Bass. You will see it all over the city, even in Longchamps restaurant windows. These two jobs are the first turned out by the AMC in behalf of the New York Industrial Council of the CIO. The city will soon be flooded with millions of second front leaflets, stickers, buttons, posters, broadsides.

For the Office of Price Administration the AMC has written and illustrated six pamphlets on such complicated subjects as rationing and price control, nutrition, clothing, rent. It condensed a ninety-page tome on price ceilings to a four-page leaflet, designed for retail food dealers. It is working on visual education projects for its own Local 30; it is helping Vito Marcantonio's campaign for reelection to Congress.

I DO not mean to over-emphasize the Advertising Guild to the neglect of the other groups in the UOPWA, but it provides a perfect example of how Mr. Merrill's organization is helping in the war. The Book Mobilization people are organizing their own industry; the Welfare people have their own Mobilization; industrial insurance agents are selling war stamps and bonds, stimulating their policy holders to save scrap, donate blood to the Red Cross, and contribute to Allied War Relief. The slogans are bright and arresting: *Books Are Weapons; Paper to Smash the Paper-Hanger; Metal to Settle the Axis; Rubber to Rub Out the Japs.* The national organization is pledged to buy $1,000,000 in war stamps every year.

They are very real human beings, these "united office and professional workers of America." They are nuts about their country; about their union; about their president, Lewis Merrill. Mr. Merrill himself is quite a guy; in his spare time he writes a column for the lively UOPWA *News* entitled *In My Opinion,* and if you think your favorite columnist is witty, pithy, or profound, you should read Mr. Merrill's pieces. He can run the gamut from human interest stories to labor history to international politics, and his people are so steamed up about him that his fan mail—pro and con—takes up more time than he has to spend on it.

Outstanding enemy of the UOPWA is the pip-squeak Mr. Pegler—which speaks worlds for the patriotism and sound Americanism of the great white collar union.

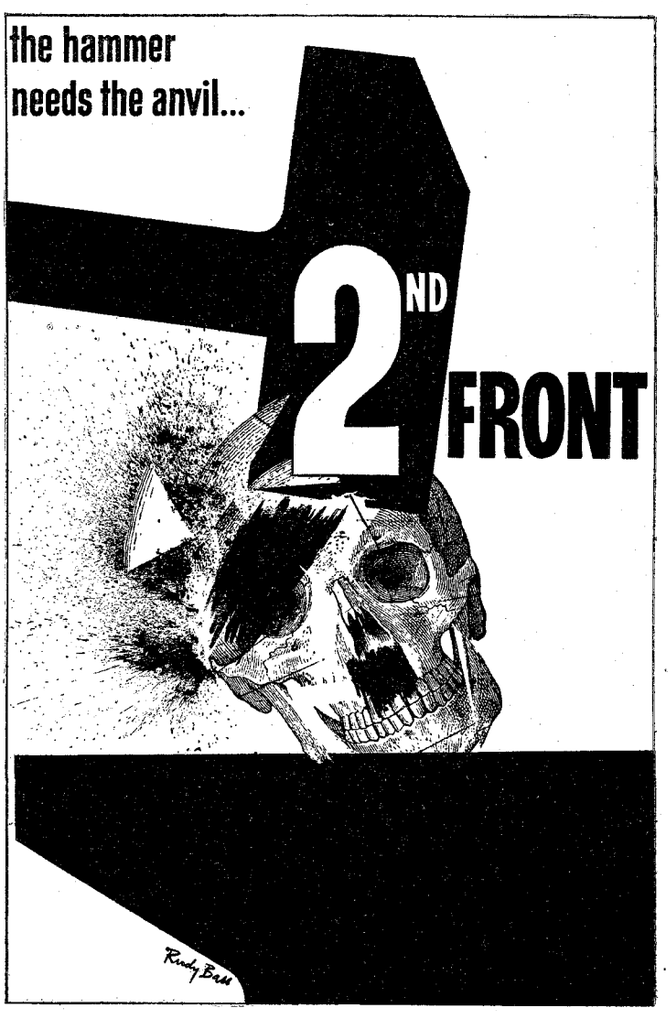
"How did you make out with Pegler's attack on the UOPWA?" I asked Mr. Merrill. "Can you sue him?"

"He's libel-proof," the union leader said. "He makes sure of that. But he's stopped attacking us." He smiled.

I have a feeling Pegler will lay off Mr. Merrill and the UOPWA in the future; he knows when he's playing with dynamite, and as Mr. Merrill says, "We're a fighting union. We're anti-fascist; we fight every form of discrimination; we led in the fight to free Earl Browder; we're leading in the fight for a second front just as we fight for decent wages for people who've been living for years on wages that wouldn't feed a dog.

"We're quote, radical, unquote, if you want to put it that way," he said, "and we can afford to be because our policy's correct—we're for the people, first, last, and all the time."

That about sums up the case of the UOPWA for the moment—but watch its smoke. ALVAH BESSIE.



Message for the times—a poster issued by the Advertising Mobilization Committee, founded by the Advertising Guild of the UOPWA.

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IT'S ZERO HOUR, HOLLYWOOD

Our movies don't show "the brave, energetic pioneering spirit of America." A British film critic pleads, "For safety's sake, let us keep the blondes out of the bomb racks." First of a series from Hollywood.

A LITTLE more than a month ago Sidney L. Bernstein, film advisor to the British Ministry of Information, addressed the Association of Motion Picture Advertisers. He had these observations to make in connection with Hollywood's war effort:

"We don't get enough films that show how the ordinary American lives—his hopes and fears. We get a steady stream of glamour boys and girls and of spies, of crooks and millionaires. But do these films have a residue value? Do they show the brave, energetic pioneering spirit of America, rising proudly and joining us in the fight? . . . We don't want dull or solemn pictures, but we would like some that seem less absurd in the daytime. . . . Phony war romances and dramas haven't their place in this war, for it is not a phony war."

Shortly after this the Motion Picture Public Relations Committee issued a report on Hollywood's personal contribution to the war. Its men and women, prominent and otherwise, were acting as air raid wardens, donating blood to the Red Cross bank, contributing generously to all war relief charities, entertaining for the USO, buying war bonds, and what was just as important, getting the rest of America to buy war bonds. The industry had also produced twenty-two special films for military training, morale, and good will purposes, while the colony's total enlistment had risen from seven to nine percent of all male workers. Finally the Writers' Mobilization and the Victory Committee—two important organizations which have done a vast amount to coordinate and put at the country's disposal the great wealth of talent which exists in Hollywood—were stepping up their program.

THE discrepancy in these two reports can be noted at once. According to Mr. Bernstein there is a separation between Hollywood and the rest of the country when it comes to the war effort. The emotions and beliefs of the American and British people are undergoing a great change but Hollywood, as yet, has not retooled so that it can explain or illuminate that change through the important art it represents.

According to the second report, if Mr. Bernstein's comments are correct, there seems also to be a separation between those working in Hollywood, and their jobs. As praiseworthy and anxiously patriotic as has been the work of the movie colony, up to now it has been largely extra-curricular. General Motors is turning out tanks, Douglas is turning out bombers, but it would appear that Hollywood, in the main, is still putting 'em together on the same old belt line.

The truth lies somewhere in between. Separations do exist, but they are rapidly diminishing. In Hollywood, as in the rest of the world, the war is effecting drastic changes. The important work of the Writers' Mobilization, for example, cuts two ways; it not only aids the war effort, but it also aids the writers. Producers, directors, actors are also being exposed to and benefited by new ideas.

Still, it might be profitable to reflect on Mr. Bernstein's observations. There have been dozens of anti-Nazi films, and scores of what might be termed pro-war pictures, yet few of them have really cut deeply into the minds and hearts of American and British audiences. Few of them have produced the hatred we must have for the enemy or stirred in us a more than ordinary love of country and flag.

Analyze our anti-Nazi films to date. With rare exception, Hollywood has merely substituted the Nazi for its stock criminal types. Instead of gangsters, we now have Gestapo agents played within the old melodramatic formula. What is not understood is that the original power and appeal of the gangster films were derived from the degree of realism and the amount of accurate observation that went into their making. *Scarface, Public Enemy, Little Caesar* were penetrating comments about an anti-social being, in which new ground was broken. There has been little penetrating comment and still less new ground broken when it comes to depicting the Nazi. Instead, by some curious perversion, *(All Through the Night, This Gun for Hire)* we have gangsters on the side of democracy who are battling the Nazi.

Analyze what are termed pro-war pictures: those films which are designed specifically to build morale. In peacetime we used to call them service pictures, and they were made with the cooperation of the government. The Army, the Navy, or the Air Force supplied the battleships and planes, while Hollywood supplied the father-son formula, or the story about the private and the colonel's daughter. Such pictures, in those days, were always guaranteed a certain box-office return and a number of them were produced annually as part of every studio's budget.

Now we are at war. The ships and planes are being used against a real, instead of an imaginary, enemy. So, too, should we use our motion pictures. Men are under actual shellfire and we are fighting, as the President has said, a war of survival. To again quote Mr. Bernstein, who was in turn quoting a British film critic: "For safety's sake, let us keep the blondes out of the bomb racks."

ALL this is said critically, yet not without sympathy, for the problem involved is a tremendous one. The desire, however, is to pose it as sharply as possible, for unless this is done, Hollywood will not be able to get to the root of its entire production program. We know that in the Soviet Union the war has stimulated enormous activity in the motion picture industry, yet the USSR is wrestling with this problem, too.

Earlier an analogy was made between General Motors and the motion picture industry. It is not entirely apt. General Motors faced a technical problem; Hollywood faces one much more complicated and involved. In a tank or a plane the ingredients are all those raw materials which have become so valuable to us. In a picture the ingredients are the emotions and ideas of people in terms of life and all its complexity. Hollywood, as in the past, must create an art as well as produce a commodity.

In some cases, producers have ignored this fact completely. Indeed, more strongly than ever, they have insisted that movies be "pure entertainment," whatever that is. In other cases, they have been willing enough to make the conversion, but have not known how to go about it. Instead, they have relied on the Hollywood tradition of trial and error.

This tradition is a crippling one, involving a great waste of

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effort and time. Indeed, wishing to avoid it, some of Hollywood's finest directoral and camera talent—John Ford, Gregg Toland, William Wyler, etc.—have joined the armed forces. These men, wishing to participate in the war directly, have felt it was only in this way that they could make their best contribution as artists as well as patriotic citizens.

But what of those who have remained in Hollywood? With these valuable men gone, the problem becomes even more challenging. Unfortunately such are the immediate needs that those in Hollywood have neither the benefit of actual experience nor the opportunity of achieving a perspective. And this is a great handicap. When Sholokhov wrote *The Silent Don* he not only knew his material through participation, but he also gave himself time to absorb it.

The answer is that the producer, writer, and director must make every effort to grasp at once and with clarity the fundamental meaning of life in the world today. They must understand this war in terms of people and forces. And because they have not the time to absorb their material, to ponder and brood over it, they must have the imagination and the intellectual vigor to project themselves into an experience much as did Stephen Crane when he wrote "The Red Badge of Courage." They must see the many and great changes taking place, social, political, and psychological and be prepared to adapt them to new forms.

Difficult, yes, but not impossible. It can be done; it is being done. Some weeks ago, for example, NEW MASSES (July 7) carried a long review of Howard Fast's novel on the American Revolution, *The Unvanquished.* Here is a fine book in which the author has interpreted profoundly much of what is going on today through his understanding of history. The same historical material is at the disposal of the motion picture industry, and it must be seized upon and used. No longer can we afford to have such distortions as *Gone With the Wind* or *Santa Fe Trail.* Instead we must portray creatively and with vigor our great American heritage in the terms stated so clearly by Vice-President Wallace: as a "march toward fuller freedom."

The same is true of what has been termed pro-war pictures. We can no longer afford to look at such things as courage or heroism in a vacuum. The men digging in on the Solomon Islands deserve a better plot than *To the Shores of Tripoli.*

RECENTLY two brilliant polemics on the treatment of women in the usual Hollywood film appeared in NEW MASSES (July 14-28). The dishonesty and unreality of that treatment was italicized, while the important point was made that women are playing an ever increasing role in our national life. Thus, it is regrettable that *Blondie for Victory* should be released at this time, for here is a picture which makes all the old mistakes and one more; the ultimate idea projected is that it's ridiculous for women to participate in the war effort. What is the use of Hollywood's always returning the woman to the kitchen, while Washington tries to mobilize her into the hospital, the factory, and for civilian defense? Can the country afford this division in the ranks?

We have mentioned two types of producer, but there is a third type which is rapidly emerging and becoming more important. These men are responding to new ideas and situations, and breaking down that separation indicated at the beginning of this article. Producers of this type are responsible for two important films, *Joe Smith, American,* and *Mrs. Miniver.* Because they are important, it is perhaps worthwhile to examine both of them briefly.

Joe Smith, American is a successful picture because it tells the story—simply and with careful detail—of an American worker. It gives him dignity as well as courage, and the audience is able to respond to the menace threatening Joe's life because he is a fellow human being as well as a fellow American. In brief, patriotism is felt to be something more than the

"Joe Smith, American" was one of Hollywood's more successful war pictures. Its story dealt with a typical defense worker and his family. Here Robert Young, as Joe Smith, is talking over a sudden call from the front office.

waving of flags and the beating of brass bands. It is something shared and fought for, within the family and on the production line.

Mrs. Miniver presents another country, and a different class. Yet fundamentally its appeal is the same as that of *Joe Smith, American.* We are shown people, basically decent, responding to the impact of the enemy wtih courage and strength.

Whether or not these pictures are great is to a degree irrelevant. That better films can and will be made about this war there is no doubt. The point to be stressed, however, is that they are in the direction we want to go and are going, and in this light there are many other hopeful signs.

Benefiting from past mistakes, notably the controversy around *The Moon Is Down,* a number of anti-Nazi films are now in work which will prove, it is hoped, neither sentimental nor stock interpretations of the enemy. In regard to *The Moon Is Down,* Steinbeck has offered the adapter, Nunnally Johnson, only one piece of advice: "Tamper with it."

There have also been purchased a number of stories about the Soviet Union and China. *Mission to Moscow, Scorched Earth,* and *Song of the Red Army* will undoubtedly do much to strengthen the growing friendship between this country and our Soviet ally. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer has bought Pearl Buck's *Dragon Seed* and plans to treat it with the same care it gave *The Good Earth.*

But time, as in every other industry, is of vital importance, and this must be understood by a great many more producers, directors, and writers. The problems indicated above are not merely esthetic and political—they are military as well. It must be known and made symbolic that there is but one chemical process which separates the making of film from the making of gunpowder. Pictures must be made as important as bullets and both must be used to annihilate the enemy, his ideas, and his very life.

JOHN FISCHER.

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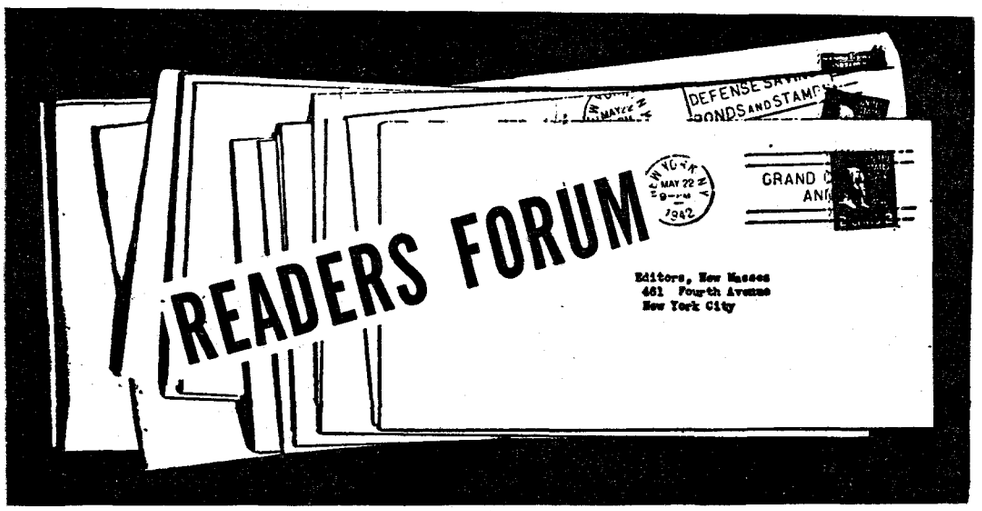

Help Them Now

To New Masses: We who are associated with the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee are very proud to point to Konstantin Nadj, thirty-year-old veteran of the Spanish war, whose remarkable deeds as a leader in the Yugoslav guerrilla forces were especially cited in the press dispatches recently. For he was one who, as a member of the International Brigade, was helped by our organization, and it was by such means that he was enabled to return to his homeland where he now continues so magnificently the fight which was actually begun in 1936 in Spain.

This valiant young man is only one of the hundreds of anti-fascist fighters who have been aided by this committee to a life of activity and usefulness in our common cause. This is the opportunity they have sought; it was the hope that sustained them in their starved and persecuted lives after they crossed the frontier into France. In Mexico and elsewhere, they are making an incalculably high contribution; they are serving on every front as active fighters, as laborers, as writers and professionals.

A considerable number of less fortunate anti-fascist refugees, though possessing visas, are unable to secure transportation because of lack of funds. The rates on the small Portugese boats which bring them to Vera Cruz are indeed high, but it seems to us that no price is too high to pay to secure that devotion to the ideal of freedom, that these men and women who, after unbelievable endurances, are still undaunted and ready to make any effort no matter how great, to defeat the Axis.

Dr. Edward K. Barsky.
(Chairman Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee)
New York City.

How High Is a Ceiling?

To New Masses: I was surprised to find James Roland in his article in the September 1 New Masses advocating compulsory savings. At a time when the bare essentials of President Roosevelt's seven-point program have been so shamefully sabotaged, it seems to me that such proposals as compulsory savings and wage-freezing can only do harm. Whatever the merits of compulsory savings may be, raising the question at this time only affords an opportunity for the reactionary press to divert attention away from the seven-point program.

Personally, I'm also getting fed up with Leon Henderson. He is so busy trying to freeze wages that he's letting the profiteers run away with price control. Prices of some canned goods have already been raised fifteen to twenty-five percent and now ceilings for many other food items are to be cracked in a couple of weeks. It looks to me as if Henderson is rapidly converting the OPA into an inflation-promoting agency.

What I can't understand in all this discussion about inflation is why prices have to rise if the government puts a ceiling on them and sits tight. Of course, profit-hungry business interests can be expected to turn the heat on, but suppose the government—in this case the OPA—refuses to budge. The trouble is that Henderson can't tell the difference between a sheep and a wolf. Instead of fighting the profiteers, he is yielding to their demands to raise prices and lower quality and at the same time cracking down on workers and consumers. Meanwhile stocks of consumers' goods are gradually being exhausted, and Henderson will probably do nothing about rationing until it is too late.

I hope President Roosevelt in his forthcoming radio speeches tells off the wage-freezers and sales-taxers and insists on the adoption of his seven-point program, including heavy taxes on excess profits, ironclad price control, and rationing. This war is the people's business, and we mean to win it despite the bunglers and confusionists.

Davenport, Ia. A. C. Lee.

Talmadge Politics

To New Masses: I am fifty years old and have lived in Atlanta all my life. That means that I have lived through more "black menace" scares than I can count. Eugene Talmadge is not the first to go howling over the red clay land of Scarlett O'Hara's pappy pursued by his former slaves. But maybe I don't need to tell you what some southern politicians can do with "white supremacy" to bring out the vote. "Gene," however, is easily the most grotesque and certainly the most monstrous I have seen yet in the whole night-shirt band. The literature which his political headquarters is passing around is obscene in its implications. And the stories that have been secretly circulated are simply pornographic. It all goes to show what a hard job he has this time to whip up any sort of genuine terror about his "menaces." The latest whisper, not pornographic but certainly vile, is that we have to elect this caricature of Tom Heflin in order to get protection from the Negroes in the armed forces, who will come back to Georgia after the war so arrogant because of their uniforms that they will endanger our lives! This, I submit, is the lowest piece of Goebbels racism.

I want you to know, though, that Talmadge and his supporters are provoking nothing but utter disgust from decent people and they are very many, representing every section of the state's population. If Talmadge wins, it will be through the trickery of a political machine, the support of native fascists, the "white primary," and the unfair working of the county-unit voting system which permits no more than about twenty percent representation of the electorate. And even then, we may beat him.

Atlanta. L. R. G.

Pictures to Remember

To New Masses: I feel that you performed a real service in publishing the photos (August 18 issue) of murder and torture inflicted by the Nazis on the people of Russia. Your caption writer was correct in saying that one *must* look at these pictures, no matter how hard it is. Photographs of this kind dispel any cynicism still remaining from the days when "atrocity pictures" were discovered, as often as not, to be propaganda fakes. For one thing, we know that the Nazis *are* practicing an incredible sort of sadism and not only against conquered peoples but large sections of the German population. Ever since 1933 we have had documentary evidence of that, a steady stream of it that can't possibly be refuted—and which few people, in fact, have ever tried to refute. It's inevitable that a brutal system will encourage brutal practices.

What I started to say, though, is that it is one thing to know such atrocities are committed and another to see the camera evidence of them. I hope many thousands saw those pictures. I wish they could be seen by readers of the New York *Daily News* and the Chicago *Tribune,* who are subjected to Captain Patterson's and Colonel McCormick's belly-aching because the American people can't have all the sugar they want right now. I trust they will also be seen by any person who still thinks America is "safe" from Nazi savagery. And I hope, above all, they will be seen by every individual who is willing to "wait a while" before opening a second front. A second front, now, will preserve us from the gruesome fate of the men, women, and children in those pictures.

Newark, N. J. Neil R. Murphy.

Correction

To New Masses: Samuel Putnam's review of the book *Negroes in Brazil* in your September 1 issue was extraordinary. We have come to expect from him in all his writing on Latin-American affairs a sense of history and scholarship which are models for anyone working in the field. It is therefore disappointing to see him employ the phrase "Negro blood" even though it appeared surrounded by quotation marks, a parenthetical remark that he used it out of necessity, and that the term was conventional but "invidious-sounding."

My point of criticism is simple. In the first place, there is no such thing as "Negro blood." Medical research has proved that. Placed in test tubes alongside blood of other people there isn't a biologist in the world, unless his employer is Hitler, who can detect the difference between the blood of a Negro and the blood, let us say of a Chinese, or a Jew, or a white. The term "Negro blood" is part and parcel of Nazi vocabulary. The idea of differences in blood is a product of Nazi racist thinking—the idea that there are inferior peoples. And it would be well if the term were completely abolished along with the Nazis. I am sorry that Mr. Putnam used it even though reluctantly.

Boston, Mass. Warren Blaine.

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NEW MASSES
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Labor Day: 1942

FORMAL celebrations of Labor Day, 1942, will be relatively brief. Many a war worker will mark the day only by intensifying his labor. Yet they have much to celebrate, these workers—their record does not need the tribute of rhetorical flowers. It is written in statistics, in the tough phrases of material facts. The most fitting tribute is that the nation should recognize those facts and, recognizing them, comprehend the human courage and sacrifice that underlies them. Best of all, to recognize the purpose—for the men on those assembly lines, on the ships that run the torpedo blockade, in the mines: they constitute a second front which demands only its military consummation.

Yet not even comprehension of this truth is enough. It should be honestly recognized and said also that the second front of production is in danger of being thwarted here at home too—thwarted by the same men who do whatever they can to prevent a second front in Europe. The danger signals of another disruptive "strike wave" scare are already out. Reports from Washington tell of attempts by prominent anti-labor persons to convince production officials that labor is planning to "take over the government" and must be slapped down. This is provocative chatter designed to break production morale, but its effect on the public mind cannot be discounted. A recent Gallup poll shows the appalling results of "strike wave" headlines: the Gallup questioners found that the people they queried actually believed production was being held up chiefly by strikes. They had been taught this falsehood by large sections of the press, which are accustomed to play the smallest, briefest strike as though it were the big story of the week. Yet the truth is, according to government statistics, the total man-days lost in war industries during July because of strikes were just eight-hundredths of one percent of those worked. When reporters at President Roosevelt's press conference a few days ago queried him about the "strike wave," he challenged them to name any important strikes in war factories. They could not meet the challenge.

As for "taking over the government," organized labor is demanding only a greater share in the responsibility of planning and coordinating production. This, with other points in the AFL-CIO victory program, has been discussed many times in this magazine The point we wish to make here is that Labor Day has a meaning this year which must be seriously understood and interpreted. To use it for superficial oratory or covert attacks on labor is to cheat the nation of a valuable opportunity.

Appeasing Franco

FRANKLY, we don't know what the President is driving at when he projects, as he did at a recent press conference, a plan whereby Americans will help preserve Spain's cultural heritage. It is not a governmental plan; presumably, private individuals and institutions will be encouraged to donate funds for the rehabilitation of Spain's cultural treasures. And it is not supposed to be "political"; as the President himself put it, Spain's ancient culture transcends the government of any particular period.

Yet the plain fact is, and it will be so recognized everywhere, that this particular project is an organic part of our appeasement of Franco. News reports say that it was generally understood the plan would operate only if Franco remained "neutral," the characteristic appeasement formula. It is also known that Nelson Rockefeller, of the Inter-American Coordinating Committee, is at present traveling through South America, trying to bind our relations down there on the basis of a great improvement in relations with Spain. It is also a fact that our trade with the Spanish Hitlerites has recently expanded. They are getting foodstuffs and oil from us (although presumably not high octane gasoline) while we are trying to get their tungsten ore, iron, mercury, and other materials.

Apparently, therefore, the United States is embarking on another cycle of appeasing the so-called "neutrals," hard on the heels of our failure with Vichy. Only last week that failure was emphasized when Petain and Laval ostentatiously thanked the Nazis for "repulsing the Dieppe invasion," a slap at the face of our Ranger commandos. It is also reported that German troops are already en route to Dakar, with Laval's benedictions.

But what alarms us is not only that such appeasement will boomerang; and boomerang it certainly will when you recall Serrano-Suner's statement in May that if Germany were losing the war, Spain would place 1,000,000 troops at her disposal. Neither is it only a matter of our relations with Russia—remember that the fascist Spain's Blue Legionaires are now fighting on the Don River. Neither is it merely a matter of the sensibilities of the bleeding millions who were loyal to the Spanish republic—indeed, what a mockery it must be to them to hear that Americans are planning to go "touring" among Spain's cultural treasures after the war, they, who remember how the fascists bombed out the culture of Guernica! It is not only all that. What alarms us about this latest project, inspired by who knows in the State Department, is the fact that it reveals *a confusion as to who are our friends in this war and who are our enemies.* It reveals the lack of political intransigeance which is the root of our delay in opening the second front.

Pattern of Defeatism

LAST week NEW MASSES commented on Harlem's 1942 "Scottsboro case." Since then four of the ten boys charged with "rape and robbery" have been freed: the authorities found no cause for indictment. Fair trial must be assured the six held, but justice cannot be guaranteed so long as the commercial press — most notoriously Roy Howard's *World-Telegram* and Captain Patterson's *Daily News* — continues its Negro-baiting "crusades." That campaign continues. It is obvious in what is published, and as events showed last week, in what is omitted. Most significant was the fact that not one of the "crime-smearing" newspapers carried an item about the rape of a nine-year-old Negro child by a white man, John Gunyan, of Brooklyn, last week. Evidently these papers saw no purpose in mentioning the latter crime since it would not fit into the pattern of their "crusade."

Meanwhile at least four Negro youths have been killed and one wounded in the past fortnight by quick-trigger policemen in Harlem on the pretext of hunting down "muggers"—robbers. But guns and nightsticks will never suffice: at bottom, in such cases—when they are genuine—is the whole vile system of Jim Crow with its denial of jobs, its rent-gouging, its degrading poverty. It is this that must be ended, and at once, before the country suffers irreparable harm in this period of its greatest peril.

Nor is this only a New York phenomenon. It is characteristic of the evil confronting our whole nation: the efforts of pro-Hitler groups to split the Negro from the white, to encourage race hatred and outbursts. Is it mere ac-

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cident that Captain Patterson's campaign in New York jibes—in time and intent—with that of the southern bourbon press and the plotting of the Ku Kluxer Horace Wilkinson, organizer of the "White Supremacy League"? This is the pattern of defeatism, the way Hitler would like things to work out in America. How long will the people—and the Department of Justice—tolerate it?

The Soldier Vote

As we go to press, Congress is wrangling over a Senate amendment (to the Soldiers Vote Bill) which could suspend payment of the poll tax as far as men and women in the armed services are concerned. It is an extraordinary sight, and a disgusting one—that the national legislative body of a democratic country at war should have difficulty making up its mind to "grant" the right of franchise to citizens about to risk death for, among other things, preservation of the right of franchise—and "grant" it to citizens who for years have had their franchise stolen from them by an unconstitutional device primarily based on a Nazi concept of racial supremacy. Some of the circumstances attendant on the debate are as disgusting as the whole spectacle. The amendment suspending the poll tax was first offered by Senator Pepper of Florida; but Senator Brooks of Illinois, the Chicago *Tribune's* appeaser candidate, saw a chance to pose as a "friend of the Negro" and grab a little personal publicity—so he stole the amendment and attached his own name to it. Leading poll-taxers threatened to filibuster to prevent passage of the amendment even if it meant delaying the entire bill until too late for members of the armed services to vote in the coming elections.

Nevertheless the amendment did pass the Senate, by a vote of thirty-three to twenty. It may have been passed or killed in the House, or in joint Senate-House conference, by the time this issue of New Masses appears. It *must* be passed, if not now, then as a separate measure at some immediate date. For not only does this very important measure embody a principle of immediate elementary justice pertinent to the waging of a just war. It is also an important wedge in the whole rotten poll-tax structure. That structure is already under legislative attack through the Geyer Anti-Poll Tax Bill. Only eighteen more congressional signatures are necessary to force the Geyer bill out of committee and onto the House floor. Public pressure has succeeded in prying it that far; public pressure can pry it all the way, and then see to it that the bill is made law. Meanwhile, however, the same pressure can equally, if not more vigorously, be applied to passage of a measure that will at least suspend the poll tax for America's armed fighters. To do that is a minimum requirement in keeping faith with the men and women who will shed their blood to keep faith with democracy.

A Statement

On the basis of an investigation which it has made, New Masses feels it necessary to make a statement concerning James H. R. Cromwell, former American minister to Canada. In the Feb. 24, 1942, issue of New Masses there appeared an article by Bruce Minton on the Washington Cliveden set, designed to implement the attack on this group made by President Roosevelt. We conceived it our duty to expose those who were undermining national unity, sowing distrust toward our country's allies, advocating a negotiated peace with the Axis powers, and in other ways giving aid and comfort to America's enemies. In England the influence of the Cliveden set, reflected in the policy of appeasement, had led to catastrophe. By throwing the spotlight on similar individuals and groups in the United States New Masses believes it has been helping avert similar catastrophe for this country and strengthening the genuine forces of national unity and victory.

However, the exposure of such enemies involves the corresponding responsibility not to link with the defeatists and appeasers those who by their words and deeds are patriots devoted to their country's cause. On the basis of information which he regarded as reliable Mr. Minton included the name of James H. R. Cromwell in his article on the Cliveden set. Mr. Cromwell thereupon brought suit for libel against New Masses and Mr. Minton. In an effort to get all the facts this magazine undertook a further investigation of Mr. Cromwell's political activities. Had the investigation proved that the inclusion of his name was justified, we were prepared to fight this case to a finish, confident of the support of our readers and friends and public opinion as a whole. Our investigation, however, proved the contrary. We found no evidence that Mr. Cromwell is or has been a member of the Cliveden set or sympathetic to the viewpoint of the appeasers and defeatists. The public utterances he has made since the outbreak of World War II and other information we have learned indicate beyond doubt that he is strongly anti-Axis. The inclusion of Mr. Cromwell's name in the article on the Cliveden set was therefore an error which we greatly regret and wish publicly to retract.

Mr. Cromwell and this magazine do not see eye to eye on many questions and in regard to our fundamental social and political philosophy. But anyone who stands for total defeat of the Axis is a patriot, irrespective of his views on other matters. Our error is, therefore, doubly unfortunate in that it has precipitated a controversy between a public figure and a magazine that are on the same side in regard to the basic question of our nation's fight for survival. Such a controversy can only weaken the war effort. National unity means the alliance of all classes, groups, and individuals who favor a smashing defeat of the Nazis and the Japanese. These classes, groups, and individuals may have divergent and even opposing views on political, economic, and social matters, but these differences must not be allowed to disrupt the unity based on their overriding common interest: victory for the United States and its allies in this great liberation war against fascism. Having mistakenly impugned Mr. Cromwell's patriotism, we welcome this opportunity to make a public retraction in the hope that it will not only right a personal wrong, but help strengthen our country's fight for life. We are happy that Mr. Cromwell has accepted our retraction in that spirit.

Investigate Dies

Eleven months ago the Dies committee listed 1,121 government employes as "subversives," and insisted that the Department of Justice investigate and dismiss those accused. The Department of Justice, through the FBI, investigated—and found evidence against exactly *two persons* on the entire list. Its investigation cost $100,000 and took the valuable time of FBI men, who could far better have looked into the activities of fifth columnists. It shook the morale of government departments, harried and terrified the accused from high officials to clerks. Six of those investigated resigned voluntarily; two allegedly found "guilty" by the FBI have been forced to resign; and the remaining 1,113 were innocent of even the "Red" connections which Dies regards as proof of subversion. Even if evidence had been found to prove the committee's charges, what would it mean?—that precious time and money had been thrown into a chase after individuals with progressive records and a devotion to democracy which is anathema to Martin Dies.

Is it too much to ask that these facts be given the same publicity that was accorded to the Dies smears of good democrats? Here is proof, if any more is needed, that Martin Dies' shield of "congressional immunity" is the costliest piece of tin armor that ever cov-

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ered an outstanding enemy of America. Worse, it shields not only Dies but myriad other enemies. In a fifty-two-page pamphlet, just issued, the National Federation for Constitutional Liberties demands an investigation of Dies' relationships with any or all of the twenty-eight persons recently indicted for sedition by a Federal Grand Jury. The charges are documented in detail. The pamphlet is called "Investigate Martin Dies!" It should be a national slogan.

Suit Against the AP

FREEDOM of the press—the real thing, not the McCormick-Patterson anti-war whoop—will definitely be advanced if the Department of Justice wins its anti-trust suit against the Associated Press. It isn't a cliche, it's literal truth to speak of the AP as a "gentlemen's club." In 1900 the Associated Press was reorganized in New York under a law governing the formation of private clubs, after it had moved from Illinois to avoid anti-trust prosecution in the state courts. Since that time it has followed a practice of blackballing newspapers that compete with member papers and withholding news to any but its members. In 1941 it acquired the stock of Wide World Photos, Inc., thereby absorbing a competing service. On these counts the Justice Department has filed its suit, charging violation of both the anti-trust laws.

It was to be expected that Col. Robert R. McCormick, publisher of the Chicago *Tribune* and one of the individuals named in the government's suit, would immediately bellow about "alien and radical" influences—in this case the Chicago *Sun* which was denied an AP charter in April at McCormick's instigation. It happens that the *Sun* is not only a rival of the *Tribune* but a pro-administration paper, which is certainly alien to *Tribune* thinking. And Cousin Joseph Patterson, from the New York end of the appeaser publishing axis, has his daily whimper about "dictatorship" in the administration. Just why Patterson prefers dictatorship of the press by the AP to a mythical dictatorship from Washington isn't hard to see. But how can you convince readers, even those who feed on a *Daily News* diet, that prohibiting monopolistic practices is fatal to freedom of the press? The United Press and INS services are available to any paper that wants to pay for them. It is only the Associated Press, with its immense facilities for news-gathering, that denies a large part of the public free access to the news. Its policy, which was "liberalized" technically but not in fact a few months ago, has resulted in killing off rival papers or preventing their birth—thereby strengthening the growth of monopoly in the newspaper field. The government's attempt to break this grip is in the interests of the whole press.

Not Too Little, Not Too Late

IN THE speeches he will deliver between now and Labor Day, the President has intimated that he will reexamine the status of our economy. In recent weeks a heartening ferment has occurred through the nation, a constructive discontent with every inadequacy. WPB Chief Donald Nelson has frankly admitted shortcomings. Organized labor expressed sharp condemnation of those still practicing business-as-usual methods, and impatience with Leon Henderson's OPA.

First and foremost, too much time has already been lost in translating into reality the President's seven-point economic program. The cost of living rises—the congressional farm bloc's defiance has prevented ceilings from being placed on more than thirty percent of vital consumer's goods. The President has made clear that he will again take issue with this selfish congressional minority; whether he will demand repeal of the provision in the Emergency Price Control Act which forbids Henderson's agency from controlling agricultural commodities until farm prices reach 100 percent of parity; or whether the President will use his war powers to supersede congressional restrictions remains to be seen. One way or the other, President Roosevelt will undoubtedly call for a strict compliance with the fourth point of his program—the stabilization of farm prices.

More is needed. Labor complains with full justice that Henderson's OPA has not utilized its authority; price ceilings have been violated and adjusted upward with Henderson's sanction but without valid reason. Too frequently the original ceilings have been set at inflated levels; in other instances, quality has been permitted to deteriorate on many consumer items. Rationing remains chaotic, with many essentials uncontrolled. For all his great energy, Henderson has so far shown a reluctance to anticipate scarcities, even when shortages are predictable and inevitable. Instead, he has concentrated his fire on wages, specifically excluded from OPA jurisdiction.

But wage freezing is a spurious panacea. It is fallacious to view wage adjustments allowed because of the increased cost of living as the cause of inflation. The country will look to the President to lay this dangerous myth to rest: in the past the President has expressed his desire for wage stabilization, a far cry from wage freezing. Both the CIO and AFL have repeatedly accepted the principle of stabilization. And recently, at his press conference, President Roosevelt insisted on the need to preserve a flexible approach to major economic problems. The defeatists, the business-as-usual proponents, naturally clamor for freezing. And so long as this threat of compulsion hangs over the heads of American workers, so long is morale impaired. Increases and speeding up of output are not to be had by penalizing the men and women who produce the raw materials and fabricate the machines of war.

Similarly, labor warns that manpower shortages cannot be overcome by edicts tying workers willy-nilly to substandard industries. Correct distribution of manpower results only from policies that eradicate grossly substandard wages and intolerable conditions like those now prevalent in the non-ferrous metal mines. The President has the opportunity of silencing those who urge compulsion rather than adjustment of grievances.

Before Labor Day labor leaders are expected to consult with the President again, as well as with Donald Nelson. The union spokesmen will once more insist that labor be granted greater participation in every phase of the war effort. The country is eager for rapid acceleration of production. At present WPB, despite considerable achievements, admittedly has not secured the maximum results expected of it. Labor is sanguine that the President will spur production by recognizing labor's demands for greater responsibility. And in addition labor hopes that the President will strike another blow at the discrimination that has humiliated and affronted the Negro people, the foreign-born, even the Jews, who are too often prevented from making their full contribution to the fight against fascism.

In his progress report to the country, the President has indicated that he will discuss the tax program. His request for a $25,000 limit on individual incomes has been brazenly ignored. The principle laid down in his tax message calling for heavy levies on high incomes has been defied in Congress; instead, the burden is piled on the backs of the lowest income groups. Even though labor and the people may be critical of the schedules proposed by Secretary of Treasury Morgenthau, the administration's tax bill at least offered a reasonable basis for discusion. But Congress brushed this reasonable basis aside. The President has the task of bringing Congress back into line.

An offensive on the economic front will necessitate a ruthless elimination of everything blocking production. The time has come for an over-all national plan, centrally administered, which will completely harness our economy to the needs of the war. The President in speaking to the nation will have the complete attention of the united people. And they fervently hope that he will confound their enemies both at home and abroad.

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TOO QUIET ON THE CULTURAL FRONT

Nazi contempt for thought does not halt Axis propagandists from battling ideas daily. The skills of "thousands of our painters, musicians, writers, teachers, remain untapped." The need for the offensive spirit.

NO INSIGHT is required to observe that we are all part of a vast process of change in American life. We sense that process in our daily routines. We read its profound effects in urgent news bulletins. Not even the most sheltered can escape its impact.

And yet the tempo of change is so rapid, its pattern so complex, its particular manifestations so varied, that we are likely to lose sight of the basic direction in which we are being swept by events. The specific tasks of each moment are of course compelling, and we rightly concentrate energy on their solution. But if we are truly to shape our fate we cannot lose ourselves in a series of moments, however self-sacrificing and loyal our activity. We must retain a sense of our starting point and a clear vision of our goal. The dynamo of anti-fascist struggle runs down as soon as we ignore its initial motive, and the victory is imperiled as soon as we take it for granted.

It is the function of consciousness, it is the responsibility of imagination and intellect, to feed as well as to guide our purpose. To abdicate this responsibility is as surely a betrayal of our cause as to limit the production of arms or to sabotage the effective employment of arms. For there are two types of psychological warfare on which the Nazis bank their hopes. One is the active warfare of words calculated to divide and confuse the democracies. This we can recognize; this we can cope with. But there is another type of warfare which is all the more insidious because it is difficult to detect. This is the passive warfare of psychological attrition. The Nazis are less hopeful that our material resources will wear out than they are that our spiritual capacities will break down under the long strain of a war which cannot be sustained without a highly conscious purpose and a clear historical vision.

We should not be fooled by the Nazis' contempt for thought. They are as keenly aware as anyone that ideas are weapons. They know that the battle is lost when men have forgotten why they are fighting. Their propaganda is designed to imbue their troops with purpose and to take purpose out of the heart of their enemy. And anyone who fails to understand the effectiveness of the Nazis' ideas and counter-ideas is as blind as the man who refuses to acknowledge the effectiveness of their armored divisions.

When the Nazis brandish their automatics at the word culture, it is not because they have renounced a strategy of ideas. It is rather because they properly estimate the role of ideas in the war. They appreciate the force of the artist or the scholar, and they graphically express this appreciation by thrusting the anti-fascist intellectual into a concentration camp before assaulting a neighboring country. And, with might and main, they seek to create ersatz intellectuals who will produce the counter-plays and the counter-novels that they consider to be necessary accomplices in their counter-human orgy. It is a mistake to think that the Nazis are content with blacking-out the achievement of intelligence through the ages. They do not stop there. They go on to replace this achievement with myths and fantasies. We know that these myths are ignorant and the fantasies insane. But we ought not delude ourselves. We must recognize that crazed Nazi minds invest these myths with reality and use them as keys to the past and future. Crippled, stupid, horrible, these anti-ideas, these nightmare values, nevertheless whip up the illusion of consciousness and destiny.

OUR strategy, by contrast, is a strategy of truth. We may congratulate ourselves on the fact that we require no reversion to barbarism for our success. We may take pride in the fact that the achievement of human intelligence is on our side, and that we defend a noble heritage. Our moral superiority over the Axis is absolute. Our cultural superiority is absolute.

But this very fact, I think, engenders a complacency that is highly dangerous. Since on the plane of morality and of culture we would appear to win hands down, we tend to assume that at least this battle has been won. We are mistaken. The battle on this front is just as real as the battle of production or the collision of military forces. For ideas are not being appraised by some impartial observer of the universe who can see at a glance that our side is entitled to the laurel. They are being tested in the very same crucible which tests our weapons. And we have to fight just as hard to make our ideas prevail as we must to make our arms prevail.

I do not believe that this is happening. On the cultural front we are coasting. As I try to cut through the momentous changes in American life during the past year in order to trace major lines of development, I am impressed by the transformation of our industrial machine and our military machine. We have been expanding in these crucial areas. We have been breaking new ground. We have, above all, been moving, perhaps too slowly and unevenly, but nonetheless surely, from the defensive to the offensive psychology. But our cultural enterprise, by comparison, is bogged down in an uncertainty and inertia which would not for a moment be tolerated in our technological or military plant. Our techniques of reaching the people with art and ideas have not been expanded. The administration of our information agencies has shifted several times, but with no decisive gain in clarity of purpose.

The fact is that in the area of cultural enterprise we are still fighting defensively, and, as an inevitable consequence, very haltingly and with great waste. That our culture must be defended is a proposition on which American intellectuals are at last agreed, and it is significant that, unlike 1917, no intellectual opposition to the war has appeared. But support of the war is only a beginning. Beyond the conception of defense, as Archibald MacLeish told the American Library Association last June, there is a second and essential step. And it still remains substantially true that our scholars and men of letters have not genuinely accepted "the necessity of offensive war." "They have not," as Mr. MacLeish said in June, "perceived that the defense of the country of the mind involves an affirmation, an assertion of a fighting and affirmative belief in intellectual things, a willingness not only to resist attacks upon their world and on themselves but to conceive offensives of their own and fight them through and win them."

AT TIMES, indeed, not even the defensive battle has been fought. When the Library of Congress was threatened with extinction last spring, there was no real outcry against the defeatist congressmen who were wielding the hatchet. There is either a lack of imagination or a suicidal fear in the failure of our cultural leaders to call for a war equivalent of the Federal Arts projects. When

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Elmer Davis, head of the Office of War Information, announces an employment policy, he speaks not of involving and encouraging all the cultural resources of the country in support of the war; on the contrary, he sets up an excluding test whereby writers or artists or professors who did not share Mr. Davis' views on foreign affairs in the past are to be deprived of the opportunity to help their country.

It is not a question of avoiding mistakes. Of course, we can do without the type of wisdom that allowed a pacifist film to be shown to British troops in Egypt, as the correspondent James Aldridge reported a few weeks ago. And we can do without the bankruptcy revealed in a recent film in which the war cannot be accepted by "reason" but only by "faith." And we can do without those interminable magazine articles which admonish us that we must kill Nazis but we must not "hate" them, since hate, even of a beast who has killed your children before your eyes and raped your wife, is a "degrading" emotion. We can do without these mistakes, but mistakes are not the issue.

The issue is whether we are going to apply daring and hardboiled thinking to our cultural problems, offensive thinking, the sort of thinking that lies behind the transformation taking place in other areas of American life. Why is it still possible for anti-fascist reviewers to find consolation in a novel by Ignazio Silone which preaches a mystical approach to the anti-fascist struggle? Why do the films, despite improving intentions, continue to fumble the ball? Why, in God's name, does more newspaper space have to be devoted to the incompetent clowning and raving of Saroyan than to Paul Robeson's *Othello?*

THE picture is one-sided? Undoubtedly. But the fact is that American intellectuals are not, as a group, charging up the dynamo. Some of them are planted so far in the postwar future which they have constructed with dazzling generalities that you would hardly believe the war has to be *won*. Others are so busy picking quarrels in the past that you would believe the main enemy was not Hitlerism but the chap in the next room who hazarded an inaccurate prediction three or four years ago. And others are so buried in the troubles of each day that they lose any sense of where they are really going.

It is a matter of necessity that we proceed to solve concrete problems now. Our books still reach only a small proportion of the people. Our plays reach even a smaller number. The cultural heritage of which we are justly proud still remains too largely hidden in our libraries. It is still possible for the press to debate the desirability of teaching American history in the universities. Other branches of the armed services have not as yet followed the splendid example of the Marine Corps Combat correspondents. Cultural interchange with our Allies both in this hemisphere and elsewhere is still in an unbelievably embryonic state. We still have thousands of painters, musicians, writers, teachers, whose skills and enthusiasm remain untapped.

The responsibility is a dual one. As in matters pertaining to industry, government has the responsibility of leadership, encouragement, direction. And equally, intellectuals have the responsibility, already met by men and women in the shops, of making suggestions and actually pressing for a serious consideration and solution of the problems they pose. It is the intellectuals who should, in the first instance, be aware of the contribution they can make to victory. Grousing about how they have been neglected will get them and the country nowhere. Only by getting together, pooling their ideas, critically evaluating the experience of the past year, and working out very concrete proposals for the consideration of our government, will they begin to improve the situation. The function of the intellectual is to deepen, constantly to deepen our understanding of the wherefrom and the whither of this war, and by such an understanding to confirm our will to victory. It would be untrue to say that this function has been unexercised during the past year. But there is sufficient cause for concern in the fact that the exercise of this function has lagged behind the general tempo of American development since Pearl Harbor.

BOOKS IN REVIEW

One Man's Credo

PRELUDE TO VICTORY, *by James B. Reston. Knopf. $2.*

THIS is a book that should have gotten a much wider audience and discussion than it has. It is not really a book so much as it is a deeply conceived and passionately written editorial, a tract for our times. It is addressed to Americans who still underestimate the seriousness of the nation's position, the great sacrifices that a total mobilization entails, the real changes that are preconditions for victory. It can't be called popular in its approach or style, but it does have some of the white heat and dead earnestness which characterized Tom Paine's appeal to his countrymen in the winter of '76.

And the interesting thing is that Reston is clearly a conservative; in fact, as Malcolm Cowley observed in a recent issue of the *New Republic,* Reston is altogether too naive and fulsome about the New York *Times* by whom he was employed in London and Washington until recently. But aside from that, the importance of the book lies in the way a serious and intelligent conservative goes back to the best in the nation's history, seeking out again the "great uniting force of the Christian ethic which started this country and was the heart of its strength in the nineteenth century" in order to guide himself in the present struggle —and in so doing arrives at conclusions with which American radicals can unquestionably agree.

Mr. Reston devotes himself to battering down a series of illusions. They are the headings of his chapters: "The Illusion That Freedom Comes Easy"; "The Illusion That Wars Never Settle Anything"; "The Illusion That Time and Money Will Save Us"; "The Illusion That We Are Fighting To Get Back to Normal." One of the very best passages deals with Washington: "The Illusion That We Can Win This War with Our Second Team," and upon rereading it, I appreciated it all the more because of a recent trip to the capital. In Reston's opinion, the phrase "with due respect to our existing obligations," the phrase that was tacked on to Article Four of the Atlantic Charter, is the root of our troubles. Too many people are trying to fight and win the war "with due respect to our existing obligations." Reston says it can't be done. "I am as ashamed and humiliated," he says, "of some of the criticism of Franklin D. Roosevelt as I am of the criticism of Lincoln during the Civil War. I do not understand why we cannot acquire any true and sincere affection for our presidents until after they are dead." And yet his criticism begins with the administration. He finds it suffering from "peacetime procedure and personnel"; from fear of congressional inquiry, from excessive "departmentalism." It is hampered, he says, "by people who won't take authority and resent anybody else's taking authority." It is hampered by people who "don't see the war for the pile of papers on their desks." He finds that too many people are *administering* the war, instead of *fighting* it. He cites the Scotsman who, after Neville Chamberlain had announced a new gentlemen's agreement with Mussolini some years back, got up on the floor of the Commons and said: "Mr. Speaker, I am sick of gentlemen; what this country needs is more cads."

Reston feels the same way. He wants less attention to the niceties of procedure; he wants people to pay less attention to the feelings of their colleagues; "We need people who are willing to take a chance; we need men of stern tempers; we need fewer committees, we need fewer lawyers; we need a whole lot more ruthless men who will ask fundamental and embarrassing questions." That's the spirit of the whole editorial.

Proceeding from this, he wants closer relations with Russia and Britain; he wants to shout out loud that the Russian front is the preeminent one for our whole coalition, without being "hailed as a fellow traveler." He wants Congress to get over the disease that Rep. Charles Eaton, of New Jersey, has called the "apotheosis of the unimportant." He wants the administration to stop thinking that "facts will speak for themselves" and give people more than just a "strategy of truth," but a fighting, living, frank understanding and analysis of how the war is being fought. He doesn't want to go back to normalcy: it is not enough that God has blessed America, he says, it's

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our turn now. Democracy must give its "own adequate answers to the problem of protecting its citizens against economic depression, unemployment, and war"—in cooperation with all other free peoples.

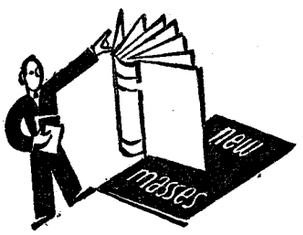
What beats in Mr. Reston's breast is the vigor and passion of Jeffersonian democracy—not yet dead—reinvigorated by the necessities of the war. He has gone back, in his own mind, to the best that was in his forefathers. He has tried to take their tough, fundamentalist, uncompromising attitude toward life and to solve the problems of our own time. Reston doesn't quite see just what it was in the way the nineteenth century ended that negated the ideals for which the early nineteenth century stood. He often has a tendency to make oversimple oppositions: for example, he is impatient with "reason," thinks people have been too "reasonable" in the last generation, and wants some real *faith* and *spirit* in the place of reason. He doesn't see the unity of reason and faith, that for example, a Marxist would accept as a first principle.

I found his book exciting. In one passage Reston recalls that the graduating class of 1932 at the University of Illinois, of which he was a member, did not seem to have any sense of responsibility for participating in the community's politics; they didn't seem to have any respect for real education, were interested only in the "easy" instructors, and above all they were all preparing to make money as though that were the life's highest purpose. Ten years later Reston confesses that his class of '32 was dead wrong, and the sooner it gets to realize it, the better.

I couldn't help thinking of the class of '32 of which I was a member, in a different college in a different part of the country. A great many of my classmates suffered the same kind of miseducation and misorientation as did the students of Champaign-Urbana, Ill. But there was also a substantial minority who decided very early that participation in politics was to be our life's work, that making money was not the decisive thing, that real education was to be found not only in the lecture halls of the "tough" instructors but in action, in the organization, the struggles of the common people. A lot of these boys found their way to Spain; they had no illusions that you could compromise with fascism. A lot of these boys were found out in front of the factory gates, organizing, educating in the great drives that made labor strong. They had found a faith—in the world of today—and recognized very early in the decade the kinship between what they were doing and what the great pioneers of our country's history stood for. They were not at all the "irresponsibles." From different premises and a different experience, a different outlook, they arrived at conclusions which Reston, in his own way, discovers and argues for in this book.

It is a welcome reunion—these two classes of '32. We can work with men like Reston. They have only to follow through along the lines that Reston proposes to find they can work with us.

JOSEPH STAROBIN.



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Southern Delta

GO DOWN, MOSES, *by William Faulkner. Random House. $2.50.*

THERE are seven stories in this volume, all but one dealing with the McCaslins of Mississippi and the Edmonds branch of the same family. Those six which present the McCaslins and Edmondses from slave days to the present constitute an informally constructed novel, with chapters that vary in mood and tone. The first is written in a high, robust humor with rather bucolic overtones, and from the standpoint of pure craftsmanship it is a superb piece of storytelling—though one may well be repelled by comedy which centers around a chase after a slave who has run away to see the girl he loves on a neighboring plantation. Casually and parenthetically, Faulkner reveals in this first story that the runaway slave, Tomey's Turl, is also a McCaslin by birth. Later we learn that he is more than half-white; he is, in fact, old Carothers McCaslin's son by Carothers' own daughter, a slave girl whose mother was also old McCaslin's mistress.

The descendants of Tomey's Turl and the white descendants of old McCaslin come into conflict, usually a muted conflict with the underlying cause—their illegitimate relationship—never openly recognized. And even holding the power of "white supremacy," the land-owning McCaslins and Edmondses do not always win. Lucas, a son of Tomey's Turl, has courage enough to fight with Zack Edmonds—and to come out on top—when he suspects that the white man has used his (Lucas') wife for his own pleasure. And Roth Edmonds discovers early in life the unrelenting dignity and self-respect of his colored relatives when he tries to reestablish a friendship that he had broken in revulsion against his Negro playmate, Lucas' son. But it is Roth, years later, who sends Lucas' grandson to jail for theft—and the grandson, the last descendant of Tomey's Turl, becomes a Chicago gangster who is electrocuted for murder in the closing chapter of the book. Scarcely any of the characters escape frustration except possibly the martyr Isaac McCaslin, who renounces the "cursed" inheritance of land and finds some measure of freedom in yearly hunting trips to the wilderness.

Go Down, Moses does not contain nearly the quota of perverts and idiots who people Faulkner's previous novels, yet the author again succeeds in conveying the horror and human defeat inherent in a way of life "founded upon injustice and erected by ruthless rapacity." But he is so trapped in that life himself, obsessed with it, hating and loving it at the same time, that he moves in circles. Even aside from the long, brooding passages there is a curiously fixed quality in his depictions of these men and women, an implied "So be it. . . ." This is especially so in his pictures of the Negroes; some of them are very sharply portrayed, but always in the terms of traits that have been imposed from without. One senses the absence of the poten-

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tial, of the human positive itself. It is lacking in the white characters too, with the exception of Isaac, who seem only to deteriorate from one generation to the next.

Yet Isaac is, in a way, the most unreal character in the book. I don't object to the completely unbelievable language which he often speaks—obviously this stately, poetic rhetoric is a literary device (beautiful and effective) which is not intended to be taken as the ordinary speech of a Mississippi planter. The unreality, rather, is in his thinking, in the long section wherein Isaac explains his renunciation. It is extraordinary prose, but the section itself is a tangle of Margaret Mitchell cliches on the Confederacy and Reconstruction, of brooding preoccupation with the relationship of landowners to their Negro relatives, semi-mystic symbols of freedom, and the Faulkner love-and-hate of the land itself. There is the implication, despite Isaac's condemnation of slavery, that the old aristocrats had something which was destroyed by money-grabbing (which, even if true, would prove nothing more than that money-grabbers are more debased than land-grabbers).

At least one reviewer, I notice, regards Faulkner's work as proof that the "Negro question" in the South is too complicated to be solved by "commissions" or "understanding." Certainly, it is complicated—but why complicate it further with insistence on less-than-major issues, with despairing attention only to the poison flowers of an overworked soil? Despite Talmadge, Dies, or Reynolds, there is less excuse today for despair about the South than there has been since Reconstruction. There are new sprouts in the earth and they are not too hard to find.

BARBARA GILES.

Textbook for Soldiers

THE BACKGROUND OF OUR WAR. From lectures by the Orientation Course, War Department. *Farrar & Rinehart. $2.*

AS ANYONE who has a brother, or is himself in the armed forces will tell you, political education in the services is one of our crying needs. It was in recognition of this need that the War Department got up its "Orientation" lectures last winter; this book derives its importance from the fact that it is not just another survey of how the war came, but is based on those War Department lectures. In terms of coverage of military events, it is an able, surprisingly readable job. It discusses in real detail the Polish campaign, the battles of the Low Countries and France, the battle of Britain in the skies and on sea in the fall of 1940. There is a chapter on the Mediterranean front, a passage on China's war, a particularly good chapter on the fighting in the Soviet Union, and the book finishes up with the first phases of the Far Eastern front, with emphasis on America's share and perspective in the war. The maps are good and plentiful; unquestionably a real effort has been made to systematize the soldier's view of military events, and give them historical connection.

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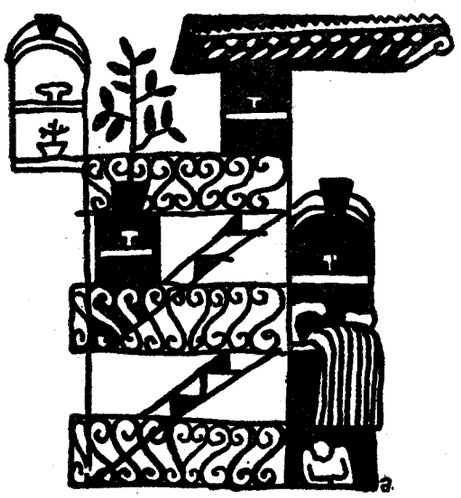
What is disturbing, however, is the superficiality of the political material. For example, it is hardly enough to say that "the League lacked the teeth to enforce major decisions" in discussing the failure of collective action against aggression in the thirties. Similarly, in discussing the period of the "phony war," in 1939-40, our authors say that "the natural, human, democratic tendency to avoid the cost of war in blood and treasure, and the disruption of the general economy, caused the Allies to grasp this opportunity to watch and wait." This certainly leaves out the heart of the matter: the last, desperate effort of the Munichmen to turn Hitler eastwards, and save themselves from a Frankenstein they had built up and could no longer control.

Most serious, and even more disturbing, is the way our authors deal with the fall of France. They attribute it to the sustained power of the German armies, the lack of coordination among the French, Belgian, and British commands, the inadequate materiel and training of the Allied troops. And they add, "There were other factors as well, but these are the most important." But the point is that the "other factors"—the seizure of power by native French fascists, who were more afraid of their own people than they were of the enemy—were *central* in France's defeat. The chief lesson that the world has yet to learn and fully apply, our own country in particular, is the lesson that within our midst a fifth column is active, and will thwart our victory unless it is crushed.

This is not to say that these War Department lectures lack political emphasis. On the contrary, they breathe a noble confidence in the American cause; the chapter on the Soviet Union is on the whole fair and respectful, in the spirit of coalition; there is no doubt that a soldier coming away from these lectures would have gotten a more integrated view of the war than the press and radio have thus far given. But it remains open to question whether our soldiers can really face up to the complicated problems of the war without a deeper understanding of such real turning points as the betrayal and defeat of France.

THOMAS KENT.



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"FOR I AM BLACK"

The profound contemporary significance that Paul Robeson infuses into his role as Othello. Alvah Bessie reviews the play that enthused audiences at Princeton. Will the play reach Broadway?

PAUL ROBESON is considering canceling his projected concert tour to bring his production of *Othello* to New York and other cities in the fall. Produced by Richard Skinner and directed by Margaret Webster, Mr. Robeson has just closed a brief engagement at the McCarter Theater on the beautiful Princeton campus. At his last matinee performance a wildly enthusiastic audience gave the artist an ovation rarely seen in the American theater, and in his dressing room Mr. Robeson told me he would like to bring his *Othello* to New York in a greatly augmented production.

"I did the play in London a long time ago," he said. "But I didn't know what I was doing then. Now I think I have a better idea of it." There were many problems to be overcome, he indicated, before he could open the Shakespeare tragedy in New York. "I'm thinking about them now," he said.

The twelve years that have intervened between his London production and the present one have made history—for the world as well as for Mr. Robeson. Those who saw him even before then—as O'Neill's *Emperor Jones* and even earlier, at the Provincetown Playhouse, in *All God's Chillun Got Wings*—realized that Mr. Robeson had the makings of a stunning actor in addition to his manifestly great qualities as a human being.

And the years between 1930 and 1942 were full; full of growth and understanding and struggle for us all. And this growth and struggle and understanding have found their reflection in the life and person and achievements of one of America's greatest artists. Together with many of his people, Mr. Robeson early became aware of the menace of fascism and enlisted in the struggle that today has reached its apogee. He was a partisan of loyalist Spain and sang there for the people, for the American boys of the Lincoln Battalion. He has long been a friend of the Soviet Union; he has long been a soldier in the ranks of American labor; and he has said that the most gratifying appearance of his life as a concert artist was his performance before a convention of the United Automobile Workers, where the audience threw back the responses of Earl Robinson's *Ballad for Americans* as Mr. Robeson sang the verses.

The program note for *Othello* states the well known fact that Shakespeare found the material for his play in an Italian novel by one Giraldi Cinthio. "The novel concerned the period when the two leading Christian nations of the Eastern Mediterranean, Venice and Ethiopia, had joined in an alliance against the Saracen Turks. For this reason critics have long contended that the traditional concept of Othello as a North African Mohammedan Moor is an historical inaccuracy." Etymology, both Greek and Latin, gives some substance to this theory, and historical data in Shakespeare's time (and usage) were exceptionally lax.

But it is certain that Mr. Robeson as well as his director thinks of the character he is playing as a Negro, and the implications he wrings from the role are wide and deep with his understanding of the part his people have played in history, both ancient and modern. To see this does not require such obvious evidence as the way the actor reads the line, "For I am black." He has infused his understanding of his people so profoundly throughout the drama that one would have to be intellectually blind not to see the point and draw conclusions. Othello was a black man who married a white woman, and the dramatist (who never hesitated to take liberties with his source material) was aware of the problem he posed in this play.

THE material of The Moor of Venice has been illuminated by Mr. Robeson's modern and alert political comprehension of the role; filled out in all directions and projected with the depth and brilliance of a great artist and a truly gigantic human being. For his performance to achieve the stature of which he is capable, Mr. Robeson needs only a great production—which would include a cast of actors capable of "feeding" him, so that he could respond with all the power and dignity and depth that are his to command. Yet even in the impoverished production that has been given him—ostensibly for tryout purposes—by Mr. Skinner and Miss Webster, the actor's performance in the role is a landmark in American theater history. And to deny audiences throughout America an opportunity to see it (especially at this particular time in our history) would be a sad mistake.

Mr. Robeson's *Othello* is a giant of a man, a great general who possesses the tenderness that so frequently goes with enormous physical strength. He is a man capable of deep love; of unshakable loyalty to those he believes are his friends (Iago); of towering passion in adversity. He is all love and honesty, credulity and faith in those who are close to him.

The play provides an opportunity, in Mr. Robeson's hands, for the projection of the magnificent Shakespearian music, which the actor-musician so well understands how to project. In his defense of his marriage before the Duke of Venice, in his love scenes with Desdemona; in his deception by Iago and the gradual undermining of his mind; in the agony of his destruction and the murder he commits over the body of his wife; in his final pathetic crumbling and swift suicide when the truth is brough to light, Mr. Robeson is exactly right. His passion is frightening; his love moves to tears; his murder and death are shattering—and understood.

Yet all this he has achieved in spite of Miss Webster's stodgy direction, in spite of supporting emotional players who cannot approach him in authority, let alone match him in understanding and technique; in spite of a production that stifles him and against which you see him in continuous struggle.

The Iago of Jose Ferrer one can understand and pity. Mr. Ferrer has attempted to avoid the obvious, stylized character handed down by theatrical tradition—the sinister and malevolent villain. On the contrary, Mr. Ferrer has practically thrown the role away. He is nonchalant to the point of incredulity; he is casual to the point of lacking any motivation for his destructive deeds. Miss Uta Hagen, as Desdemona, *could* be adequate and satisfactory; at present she is negligible. The role is not demanding; she needs only to convince the audience that she loves Othello, as Mr. Robeson's *Othello* so obviously adores her. This Miss Hagen does not succeed in doing. She is lovely and graceful, but she carries no conviction and her voice is a high monotone.

THERE is no point in mentioning the sets and costumes, which were apparently knocked together or borrowed for a few performances. A major production would take care of this, for Mr. Robeson's *Othello* demands all the beauty of pageantry and lighting the theater can so easily provide. But something must be done about Miss Webster's direction of the play. She is intelligent; she understands the play (and she should not play Emilia); but her direction is only a shade above good amateur production. It is studied; it is academic; it creaks in the joints.

Her *Othello* wears the traditional beard—which Mr. Robeson should not do. Mr. Robeson is an extremely handsome man; he should toss tradition to the winds and play

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the role clean-shaven. Let us see all the masculine charm as well as the mobility of feature that are his. Mr. Robeson must take over the role *completely*—the play should revolve around him; not he around the play. His magnificent voice must not be *used* by the director as a musical instrument—in other words, exploited; in still other words, he must not be urged to sing the role. Instead, his director must say, "Mr. Robeson, take the play and play it; make every reading your own—not mine; read the lines exactly as *you* understand them; use your voice, yourself, as you use it on the concert stage. Do not let *me* use your voice."

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This is a people's war; Mr. Robeson is a people's artist. It shows in everything he does; even when he signs programs for youngsters who come backstage and ask for autographs. Let him go to the people with his *Othello*. It will be a major contribution to our victory.

ALVAH BESSIE.

The Nazi Technique

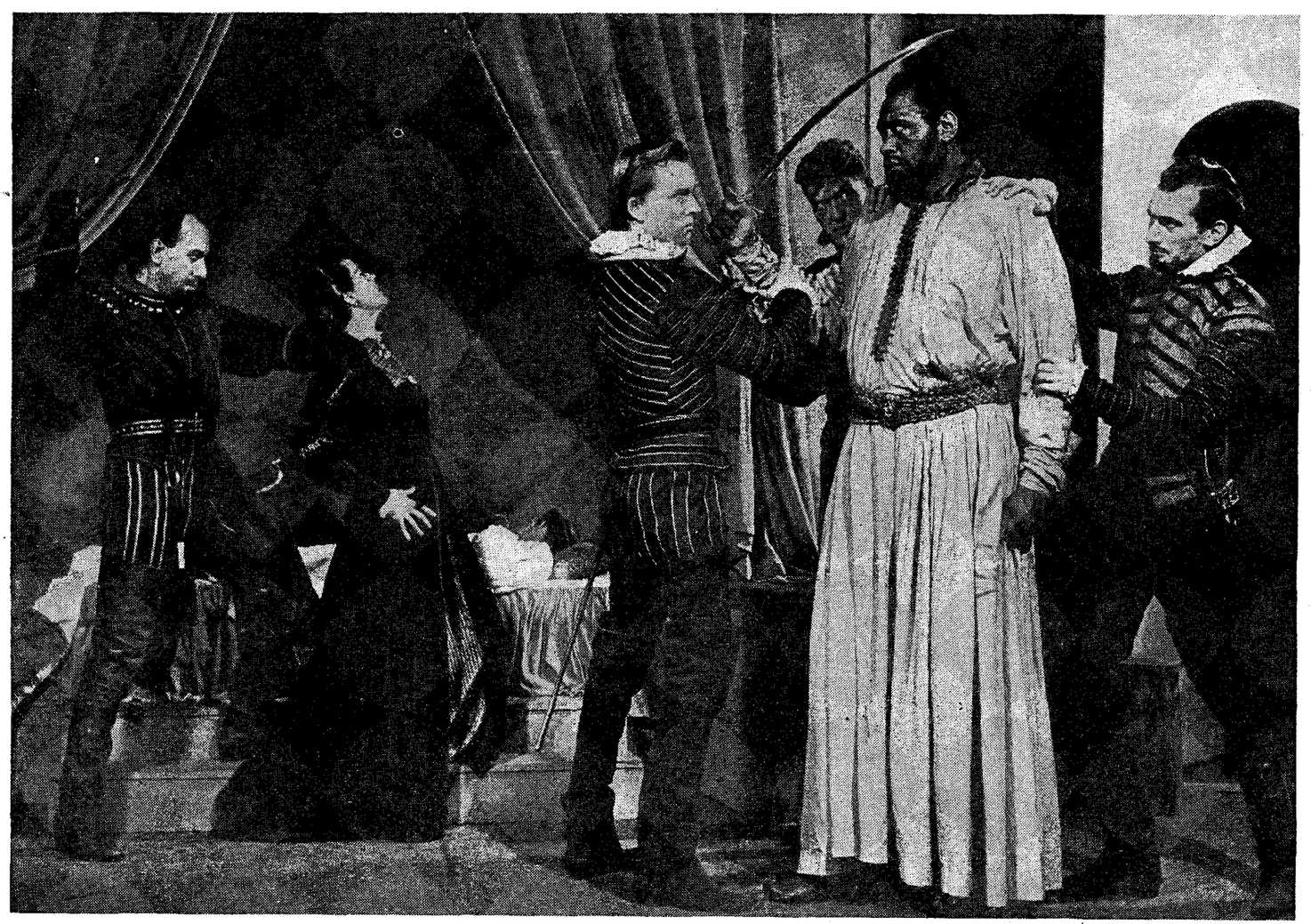
A movie that deals with rumormongers. . . . "Battle for Siberia"

A FAIR indication of what can be done with moving pictures to help clarify the issues of the war is Warner Brothers' short film *Divide and Conquer,* now showing in neighborhood theaters.

Taking its theme from the Office of Facts and Figures' pamphlet of the same title, the film effectively and dramatically presents one aspect of Nazi psychological warfare: the fifth column technique of dividing a country from within its borders. Agents are sent all over the world—as businessmen, as tourists, actresses, and manicurists, to spread division, to plant rumors and hate-themes, to instill in the mind of a population distrust for its leaders, to augment anti-war sentiment, to implant the idea of Nazi invincibility and the possibility of making a deal with a "young, dynamic, efficient" Third Reich.

How this technique works in America is graphically illustrated by the use of common American types who have unconsciously fallen victim to the ideas spread by conscious agents of Hitlerism—native or foreign-born. A woman talks over her back fence to a neighbor mowing a lawn: "I hear the Russians are going to make a deal with Hitler and sell out the democracies." A man in a porch-rocker casually says to another, "You know what I heard from a relative in Washington—we lost our whole Navy at Pearl Harbor." A worker says to another, "At the rate the Japs are going, they'll be in San Francisco by fall."

The way to combat this technique is somewhat sketchily portrayed; it would have been well to carry the idea further, to demonstrate how some native Americans of prominence in business, industry, and Congress (need we mention any names?) are trying to incite management against labor, white against Negro, Gentile against Jew, Catholic against Protestant. Such material would in the end



Othello (Paul Robeson) is restrained from attacking Iago, whose treachery has been exposed. The scene takes place in Desdemona's bedroom. In the play Robeson shows his magnificent acting talent.

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prove more effective as a weapon than the remedy the film suggests: simply to refuse to believe rumors and send the rumormonger on his way with a good old American "roll your hoop." For the divisive forces in our country are much cleverer than this film gives them credit for being, and their technique requires a more basic explanation than was offered.

The fact that such a film should be circulated at such a time is heartening, however; it is an indication that the industry in Hollywood—and the government first of all—is aware of the issues in this people's war and wants the people to have the truth about it.

"BATTLE FOR SIBERIA," released here by Artkino, was originally produced under the title *The Defense of Volochayevsky,* and was made by the Vassiliev brothers, who were responsible for the masterpiece *Chapayev.* Their style is familiar and *Battle for Siberia* is in the main line of the great civil war and intervention films like *Baltic Deputy,* the two Lenin films, and *We Are From Kronstadt.* If it does not quite achieve the power and depth of these works of art, it is not through lack of material to work with, both historic and histrionic, but possibly through the failure of the script writer to reach the heights these other films scaled so nimbly.

It is good, however, for American audiences to get this look at our Pacific enemy, Japan. Here is the true face of the Samurai, bland and hypocritical, polite and brutal at once. The fable itself is simple; it begins with the bald provocation committed by the Japanese in Vladivostok in 1920, when they murdered one of their own civilians, a watchmaker, and used this "outrage" as an excuse to occupy the town to "protect" its Japanese inhabitants.

Allied with the White Russian interventionists in the Maritime Provinces, the Japanese set the Siberian *taiga* aflame. The people of the new Soviet land rose as one man to repel the invading sons of the Rising Sun—as they were rising in the west to repel other invaders. Against the well trained, well equipped hordes of the Mikado they opposed their poorer equipment and their sterling man- and woman-power.

For the focus of attention we have the duel between the Red partisan commander Andrei and his antagonist, the Japanese Colonel Usuzhima. If the film falls short in any other respect, it is magnificently sustained by the performances, in these roles, of Nikolai Dorokhin and Lev Sverdlin, respectively. Dorokhin's is a thoroughly sound job; keenly understood, calm, and intelligent. But the performance of Sverdlin as the Japanese colonel is a masterpiece of acting, which must be seen to be believed. Together with such performances as Nikolai Cherkassov's in *Baltic Deputy* and Boris Schukin's as Lenin, it provides the ultimate answer for those who feel there is some reasonable basis for type-casting.

In its essence this is a simple story, intended only to demonstrate in film—as the Soviet people have demonstrated in life—the qualities of heroism, devotion to one's native land, and persistence in the face of what seem in-

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superable odds. Honored Artists of the Republic like Barbara Miasnikova, Boris Chirkov, and Boris Blinov play relatively minor roles in the film, with the authority we can expect to find in all such roles in Soviet films. But the main impact of *Battle for Siberia* lies in its timeliness, in displaying for American audiences (albeit in fictional, film story form) the true nature of the Japanese enemy, who can murder and pillage with a smile on his face.

When Colonel Usuzhima is forced to withdraw his troops from Siberia in the face of the Red Army's victory, he says, "Before, we used to study Russian two hours a day. From now on we will study it three hours a day." Made years ago and only now somewhat altered and reissued, *Battle for Siberia* is a warning—a warning of things to come if the second front is not established soon.

A. B.

Cherry Lane G & S

The Savoy musical troupe enjoys its work.

THE Savoy Opera Guild, scarcely known to the customers of Shubert Alley, has just completed its tenth successful month of Gilbert and Sullivan repertory. Hidden away in the Cherry Lane Theater, that musty little house which once served the Greenwich Village bohemians, this company has been attracting enthusiastic audiences. Its most recent bill consisted of *Pirates of Penzance* and a piece called *Cox and Box*. This last named is as fine a brand of corn as ever emerged from any theatrical silo, but it produced the best singing of the evening. It is by Sullivan and Gilbert's predecessor, F. C. Burnand. *Cox and Box* was composed for solos and duets only, and it is delightfully sung by George Headly, baritone, and Don Loring Rogers, tenor.

Although the *Pirates* did not yield any single number that matched the "Gay Guitar" or the "Farewell" duet of the opener, it was a neat and honest rendition. This troupe benefits not only from good musical direction, but the genuine enjoyment that the members of the cast put into their work. The chorus, containing many non-trained singers especially among the women, sometimes wanders from the path of musical rectitude, but it always treats the lyrics in the spirit in which they were written. The principals, all trained singers, are new to the Savoy operas, and they perform with a freshness and gaiety that is absent from many a hardened Gilbert and Sullivan troupe.

The Frederic of Don Rogers was properly romantic and stuffy as the Slave of Duty. His duets with Virginia Blair, as Mabel, were excellently sung and acted. Natalie Landes as Ruth handled her difficult role as the pirate maid with charm and ease. Seymour Penzner as the Pirate King and Al Shapiro as his lieutenant added strength to the pirate band. The company might not have fared as well if it were not for Arthur Lief's intelligent and disciplined direction. It is largely due to him that the cast gives an impression of experience.

JOSEPH FOSTER.

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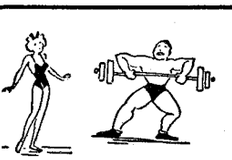

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MARCH 1933

When Hitler came to power the press as a whole regarded him only as a danger to the Jews within Germany itself.

JULY 1936

The "non-intervention" policy and the feeling that the war in Spain was just an isolated incident, was the general newspaper line.

SEPTEMBER 1938

The "peace in our time" meeting in Munich of Mr. Chamberlain, Hitler, Daladier and Mussolini was hailed and welcomed by the majority of the press.

NOVEMBER 1939

Remember how Finland was spoken of as "a little, free, steadfast, democracy," fighting in the interests of our country, all under "the aged yet lovable Baron Karl Von Mannerheim"?

JUNE 1941

As the Soviet Union was attacked by Germany, and was welcomed as a fighting ally by Churchill and FDR, the press said it would be surprised if the Red Army would hold out a month.

WHAT NM SAID IN ITS ISSUE OF THAT WEEK:

"Those who are silent against the crimes of the fascists are, in effect, their supporters. Every worker, every honest intellectual, must raise his voice and exert his strength against the monster."

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